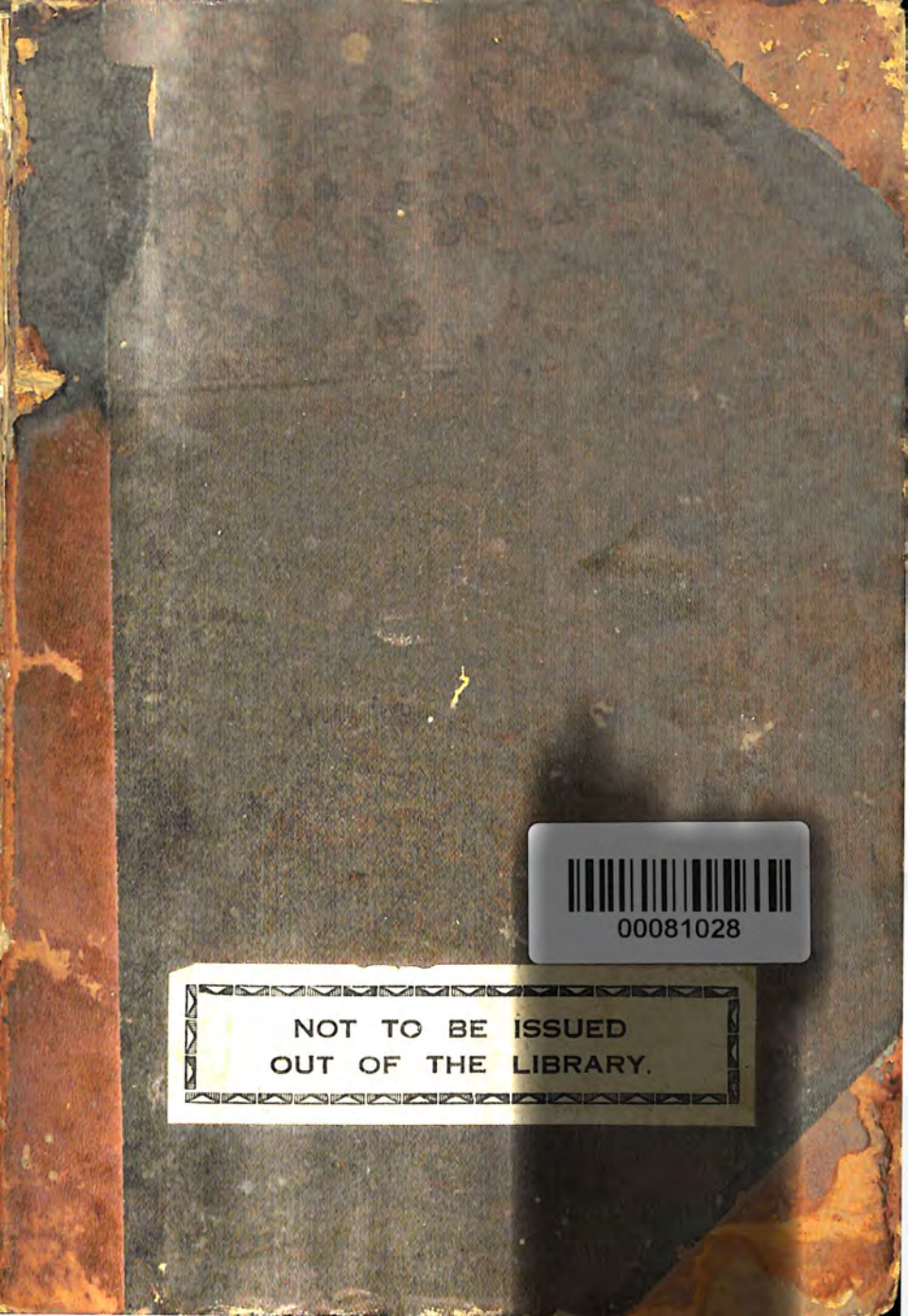
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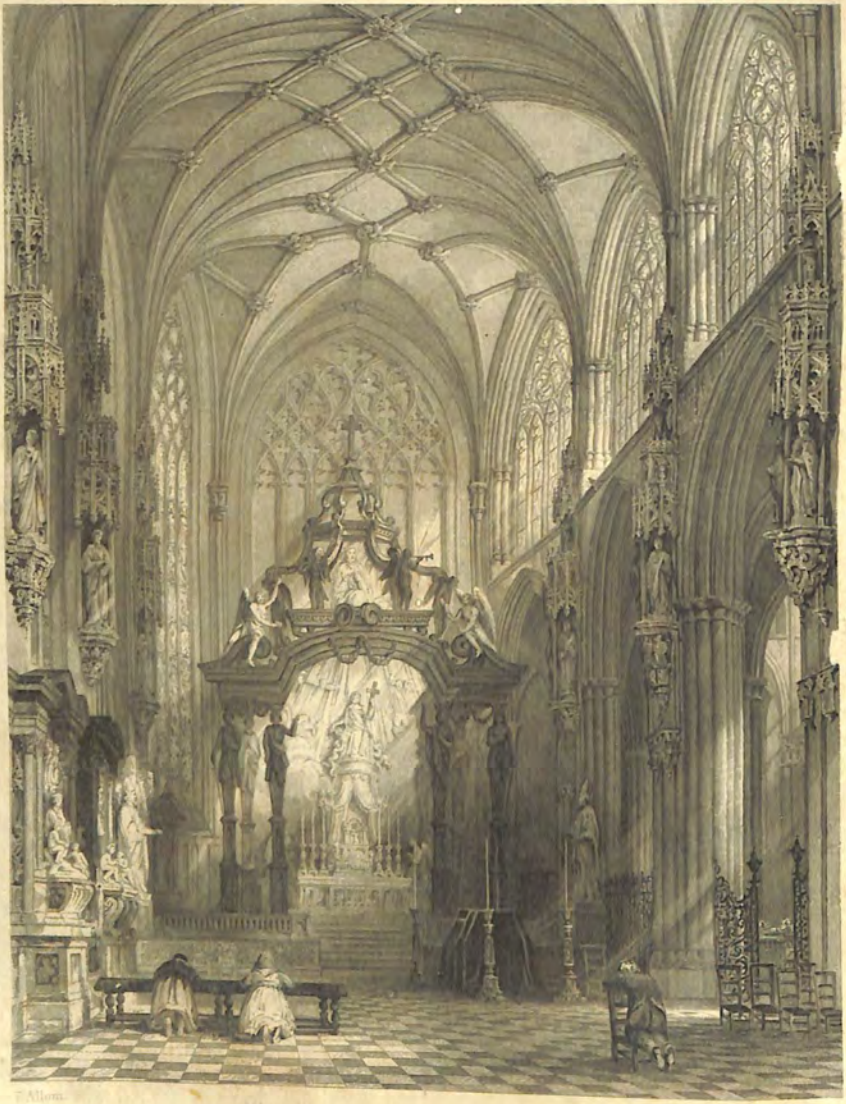

T. Allom.

T. Turnbull.

Choir of St Gudule Brussels

London Published for the Proprietors by Longman & Co Paternoster Row October 1840

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HEATH'S

PICTURESQUE ANNUAL,

FOR 1841.

BELGIUM.

By Thomas Roscoe Esq.r

Tower of the Hall in the Lower Market
Bruges

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APPLETON & CO NEW YORK AND FISHER & CO PARIS

BELGIUM:

IN A PICTURESQUE TOUR.

By THOMAS ROSCOE, Esq.

WITH SIXTEEN HIGHLY-FINISHED ENGRAVINGS,

FROM ORIGINAL DRAWINGS,

By THOMAS ALLOM, Esq.

S. C. 22

"More mighty spots may rise—more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze,
The brilliant, fair, and soft,—the glories of old days."

CHILDE HAROLD.

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LONDON:

LONGMAN, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THERE is perhaps no country in Europe which, from a variety of concurrent circumstances, presents so many points of interest and attraction as Belgium at the present period. Intimately connected with England in regard to her history, character, and position, in regard to the progress of useful science, and the facilities of communication; the consolidation of her monarchy and free institutions under the auspices of a prince deservedly dear, from former associations, to the English people, is alone calculated to produce a community of feeling, with that respect and attachment derived from mutual benefits, which independent and constitutional states never fail to entertain towards each other. In no unprophetic strain was it sung by our immortal Pope:—

> "The time shall come, when, free as seas or winds,
> Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind.
> Whole nations enter with each swelling tide,
> And seas but join the regions they divide:
> Earth's distant ends our glory shall behold,
> And the new world launch forth to meet the old."

But there are other and more enduring claims which Belgium might fairly prefer upon our gratitude and

affection. She pointed us the way to commercial enterprise; she instructed us in manufacturing skill; she colonised our incipient towns with experienced industrious artisans; and she sent us colonists of a higher grade—her great painters, architects, and sculptors, who raised and who adorned royal palaces and noble mansions, while her learned men filled our seats of learning, and her musicians and minstrels made our halls resound, as they continue to this day, with the splendid scientific emanations of their enchanting art.

At the same time, it is not Belgium only as she was, but as she is, that the writer of the "Picturesque Tour," has aimed at describing,—her treasures of art, her splendid memorials of loftier times, her grand church and civic architecture,—all of which, from a singular combination of circumstances, have excited less attention than they deserved; and are beginning gradually to disappear before the new light of a mere utilitarian, monopolising, and money-making age. In a word, the work of *exploration* has been commenced, and is going rapidly on; private collections are enriched at the expense of public establishments, and without some legislative supervision Belgium will lose the lustre of her reputation as a treasury of the Fine Arts.

Although preserving the name, the following tour is wholly distinct in its views and character from the usual class of annuals; it was the writer's object to render it as amusing and instructive as he could, independent of mere pictorial illustration, so as to form a standard book of travel for the thousand and one visitors continually passing through this little Eden of the arts, on their route to other countries.

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* Page 50, line 7, *for* "here represented," *read* "as represented in the Vignette."

A PICTURESQUE TOUR,

ETC.

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Steam—Boats and Rails—Advantages of, to Belgium and Great Britain—Noble and happy results—Old Father Thames—Scenery and sail—Pretty effects—Sensations at sea—Passengers—Resources to kill time—Conversation a great art—Topics general and particular—Safe Conversational Rules—Incidents and Examples—Ravages of sea nausea—Discussions on Art—Ostend—Modern and Ancient Traits—Sea Bathing—Pavilion Aunts and Dowagers—English and Belgian—A good Bargain—Source of delicious Reflections—Departure for Bruges.

STEAM boats and iron railways, those grand incentives to modern travel, are peculiarly so in regard to Belgium—our favorite British highway for the continent. It is no longer, in the words of the facetious author of Hudibras,

> "What perils do environ
> The man who meddles with cold iron!"

which the more you *now* choose to meddle with, the sooner you are enabled to bid good bye to your enemies and arrive at your new place of destination. But what poet could have dreamed of an age of iron (the true golden age too) so glorious as ours, spreading its wings of steam far over sea and land; and in a few hours bringing countries the most remote within our familiar view? To cross the ocean, to traverse the Low countries, to be far on your route up the Rhine or the Danube, is not as formerly the work of days and weeks; and it is pleasant to reflect that you can dine with a friend at Brussels, and arrive in time to breakfast and transact your business next day in London. "The Earl of Liverpool, Captain Lomax, Ostend!" a fine May morning, and old Father Thames looking at once serene and animated, like a good man of business, at his desk,—for he never appeared to us more *occupied*,—are almost in themselves a temptation to take a trip. Assuredly he never saw so sprightly a race before; whether "on earnest business bent," or "plying the paths of pleasure," for there is something in the rapidity of transit, which of itself excites a desire of locomotion, even in the most tranquil and home-loving breasts.

After a scene of good humored bustle, unequalled, perhaps, in any part of the world, you begin to breathe the pure air of the glorious sea; you seem to shake off the dust of a whole age, and of a whole metropolis. Even the fancy, like the

eyes, seems to be more awake; the ever varying scenes, new ideas of trade and commerce, of rapidity of communication, already producing a sort of freemasonry of thought and language, fraternizing the most inveterate enemies, and preparing our children for a higher citizenship of the world, glance like pleasant sunbeams across the mind. If it augur well for the peace and prosperity of nations, our steam-winged commerce is of no less advantage in the dispatch of business and sordid cares of every kind within half the *old* time; —new sources of information, and consequently of more refined pleasures, are opened up; while ignorance, that fruitful cause of strife and discord, which clung like the poisoned tunic of Hercules to every people and turned their strength to madness, is fast disappearing before the light of a better day.

Ingenious and enterprising Belgium, with the dispatch of science, has happily superseded the dispatches of war; utilitarian doctrines have usurped the place of national animosities; the goddess of Reason, falsely so called, has everywhere abdicated her throne to her legitimate sister Temperance, who alone issues her war manifestoes against "Comus and his midnight crew," with increased energy, and with marshalled hosts of teatotalers, who threaten to establish new *customs*, and cut off the old *excise*.

Our Thames scenery—a perfect study for the

artist—always presents something picturesque in the diversified forms and colors of its passing sail; "its margins green," its gentle undulations and eminences, old national edifices, marts of commerce, pleasantly interspersed with villas or monumental relics, calculated to awaken observation in the most indifferent mind. All these seen in clear sunny weather, under a thousand varying lights and shades, form a pleasing contrast with the forest of shipping, white sails in the distance, the rapid dash of steamers, the rolling and dipping of the lordly yachts, the stern visage of the man of war, the painted Indiaman, the frigate, the busy brig, and more numerous merchantmen, with every stitch of sail on, bound for the land of cargoes, as if the demon of avarice himself had launched them with resistless hand upon the mighty deep. A still greater variety of small craft, down to the black colliers, flats, wherries, and boats without number, will give you the complete picture of a commercial river, such as is nowhere else to be seen.

It is a delightful sensation when you first gain the open sea—the quickening breeze, the expanding waters, the far grand view, with the play of the sun light, and the reflection of the skies on the billowy tracts—all tend to produce a degree of exhilaration which is seldom or never experienced when upon land.

But this is not so with all: I was a happy exception to the general rule, and the nearer we

approached our destination, the more inspiring was the sea air, till it soon made me cast many a wishful glance at our preparations *à la fourchette.* The passengers were that day few, and for the most part ladies. There were two Frenchmen, three Belgians, and four English; yet, few as we were, within five hours after putting on steam, at 11 A. M., it was serious to observe the gaps which began to appear in our little circle. Ladies and children usually undergo the severest ordeal—it was the bathing season at Ostend—and the passage is often an excellent seasoning indeed for those who can bear it, and quite sufficient to remember till their return. We sat down, however, a fair and goodly company, at 3 P. M. to an excellent repast, and tried to banish all uneasy feelings by discussing the subjects before us, in a good humored vein, mixed with all the pretty *persiflage* and scandal of English borough towns—little court anecdotes of Paris and Brussels, a few national jests and sallies, which it is fortunate, perhaps, there were no ladies from Holland to criticise, —in particular when we touched upon the attractions of the Belgian queen, her benevolence, her presents to public institutions, the frank unaffected conduct and the tact* of her royal consort. We wish we could say as much for that of *all* the ladies on this occasion; but the utterance of a single innocent

* "Il a du tact, le Roi," is a favorite expression with most Belgians of the loyal caste.

bêtise is frequently sufficient to destroy the pleasure of an entire company. In mixed parties, indeed, it is invariably most wise and appropriate to confine our remarks to small-talk, as it has been aptly termed; or to treat of matters generally interesting—science, arts, and arms, of heroes and princes in the true epic style, and of personages out of the probable sphere of those present. We should then run no risk either of inflicting or of suffering the slightest annoyance in the course of conversation.

Good sense and correct feeling—qualities unfortunately more rare than popular, naturally dictate the observance of such social rules; the more important as ladies may venture upon a certain latitude of expression, not tolerated in the rougher sex, without fear of its being followed by very fatal results.

From the topic of courts and fashions, the open and generous conduct of king Leopold, the peaceful national labors of Louis Philip, we had approached the hero of a hundred fights—the arbiter of Europe, the conqueror of Waterloo; we had even elevated our ideas to the standard of Belgian independence, in the description of which a young advocate, the son of general M., took a lively part. He had been one of the foremost in the movement; and it was precisely his character that one of the ladies, committing UNE GRANDE BETISE, fixed upon to criticise in one or two rather uncomplimentary terms, wholly unconscious of the presence of that general's

son. At the first mention of the name, I observed that some one rose and went upon deck; a French gentleman who happened to be near me stated to me the circumstances, and I had scarcely sat two minutes, when the same party resumed their observations in a spirit which rendered it incumbent upon the writer either to follow the example of the young Belgian, or to recommend to the notice of the fair that conversational doctrine of so much value in mixed parties. He did rather more; he took on himself, against a powerful diversion of voices, to support the reputation of the general and his party, without much detriment to his own position and line of defence.

Though not so unsoldierlike as to wish for an ally in a rougher sea, nor, he hopes, so ungallant, it nevertheless came to his aid, silenced the enemy's best guns, and picked them off, in the military phrase, one by one. Our seats becoming "few and far between," we kept continually closing ranks like a regiment under a sharp fire;—it had been a fine May morning, but it was a very November afternoon, and we were soon made sensible that we had got into the open sea. Not a lady was to be seen, and the gentlemen whom the young advocate now humorously designated as our "Knights Hospitalliers," betook themselves each to his own little hospital (his berth), or were dimly seen through the twilight hanging (no inappropriate term) in agony over the vessel's side. The young count and

myself still stood our ground; and the captain as he passed us, once observed, "Were I an admiral, sir, I would make you post captain, if you do not soon take your turn." "It will be sure to come," cried the count, at the same time exclaiming in the mock heroic of the old blind bard;—Ου γαρ εγωγε, &c. —thus popularly paraphrased by some Irish subaltern of the great Mr. Pope, in words more plain than classic or refined:—

> "Strong though he be, and like a Trojan sup,
> The roaring main will bring his dinner up."

"No, no!" I exclaimed, "I defy you to place me upon the sick list; not that I triumph in beholding so many fallen around me, while the same elements that thus afflict weaker natures disturb not the equilibrium of the favored few." But how long we might retain that equilibrium and our advanced positions upon deck, was a question yet to be solved by time.

Philosophy, however, never more divine than in a small circle of sound heads at sea, with wit and generous wine to celebrate each other's prowess; with a strain of poetry (I was quoting for the young Belgian, Dryden's famous lines to Sir Godfrey Kneller), a dash of literature, and the arts came pleasingly to our relief. In all these, the young Belgian showed himself a critic of no common

order, occasionally improvising for us with considerable dexterity, till we became so happy in each other's society, that we agreed to pursue our route together along the Meuse, and to the banks of the Rhine.

Though not a professed critic, the count, like our excellent friend M. Passevans, knew a good picture when he saw it; he was well versed in the distinctive features of the schools, from the old Greek down to the modern Dutch and Esquimaux. He had the art of drawing happy parallels; he at once seized the resemblances and differences in each; he compared the Italian and the Flemish, contrasted them with the French, the Dutch, and the English; and then attempted to show how far their peculiar manners had been maintained during their progress, and by the moderns. He considered the old Flemish as coeval with the best Italian models, "though I regret" he added, "that the great historian Lanzi should not give us credit for an entire national originality."

"Impossible!" I replied, "it was not his object to raise your school into a rivalship with happy Italy."

"Assuredly not," replied the count; "but what I contend for is that Flemish painting may lay claim to a twin-sisterhood with Italy herself, in the revival of the arts. It is strange that so few foreigners should have done us justice; yet look at that best criterion of relative excellence—price; and mark

in what estimation our pictures and prints are held." "I fear that you will never convince me," said I, eager to bring the young advocate into play, "that your old Flemish school, excellent as it is, does not owe its best features—all that is most beautiful and noble—to its having been grafted upon the Italian; not to its native strength and originality. What does Lanzi say? does he not allude to it as to a child coming to its first school? the school of Italy and of the world."

"Certainly not," was the young Belgian's reply, (reddening up a little,) "I mean in the general sense, that in which we should take the whole bearing of the historian's words. They will not countenance so strong an interpretation as you put upon them; and I will convince you of it upon our arrival at Brussels. There, and before we reach that capital, I will show by different collections, as well public as private, that I have not been making use of idle boasts; that our old Flemish school is native—not adopted—and partook in the same glorious light which Greece shed upon Italy; that our actual modern school is not incapable of supporting its reputation; that its works are already sought by the amateurs and collectors of other nations; that they will not shrink from a comparison with those of any modern people in existence."

No one could listen to the young Belgian; his strong love of nationality, his enthusiasm for art,

his reverence for the beautiful and the great, without a sentiment of respect. As he paused, he directed my attention to the ramparts and spires of Ostend, seen through the clear moonlight as we entered the breakwater. The vast dyke, the old canal of Bruges, the pavilion of the baths, rose from amidst the ruins of the once thronged and bustling port, now silent and melancholy as a desert. Its commerce like the hostile troops which beleaguered its walls had disappeared; the foot of the stranger had succeeded the fiery track of war; on its esplanade or in its streets nothing more formidable is now to be seen than maiden aunts or cousins; bevies of nursing maids with their little charges; staid dames and dowagers arrayed in their native stuffs or silks, engaged in making bargains with the bathing women for dipping their young people, so many by the dozen; putting in the children at half price, and ensuring a succession of dips for themselves and their friends, during the entire season; and when fourteen for the dozen is obtained, it will usually furnish a topic of congratulation and triumph for the rest of the evening.

The sea-beaten aspect of Ostend, the façade of the pavilion, the Place d'Armes, themonumental ruins, the wide spreading sea from the encircling ramparts at once picturesque and wild, even the reading rooms and hotels, theatre and *estaminets*, are all insufficient to rescue it from a monotony and dulness which make the stranger anxious to

proceed; for it is only four leagues from Bruges, and twenty-two from Brussels. Not a few historical associations attach to the city which has rather an antique and old-fashioned appearance—the *écluses* were erected as early as 1660, and the port may be considered a handsome monument of the emperor Joseph II.

The coast of Ostend presents one continued line; the approach is difficult, and vessels pass the two jetties by so narrow an opening that they can only enter at flood tide, and the attempt is dangerous with a strong contrary wind.

For a considerable period Ostend, now chiefly celebrated for its fine oysters, was a place of considerable importance. In 1583 it was strongly fortified by the prince of Orange; it sustained a long siege by the archduke Albert upwards of three years, in which the Infanta Isabella of Spain, was made to appear arrayed, though a mere child, in a rich cuirass, to astound her enemies. In 1604 the town was captured by the Spanish general Spinola, though not till it had been reduced to extremity, and lost upwards of 30,000 by sword and famine. As a proof of deadly execution, it is mentioned that the enemy fired no less than 150,000 *coups de canon*—a singular calculation, which shows they must have made rather a strong impression.

It is also curious that one of the first trading companies to India, should have been established as early as the reign of Charles VI. at Ostend, but

the extreme jealousy of the Dutch and English prevailed with the court of Vienna ; its charter was revoked in 1731, and the next year, we are told, that upwards of 2,800 persons among the most enterprising and industrious citizens left their native city, then rich and flourishing, for some freer ports.

We reached Ostend, with the tide, at half past two in the morning, after a fifteen hours' sail, quite long enough to weary out the most robust or philosophical temperament. Having committed our luggage to the *douaniers*,—that pestiferous class all over the world, I declined the services of *M. Le Commissionaire*, lacquied by a host of porters, and proceeded in a voiture with my Belgian escort to the *Rose d'Angleterre ;*—a very attractive name just now for loyal English passengers ; and in point of neatness and attention, and an excellent breakfast, we found it worthy of its pretty name and its reputation. Instead of retiring to repose, like other passengers, in a state of perfect exhaustion, we made excellent use of our *fourchettes* ; sent for our luggage from the custom-house, and a little after six were seated in one of those spacious and richly furnished carriages, resembling a soft and elegant boudoir, compared with the old clumsy diligences,—and proceeding, about twenty-five miles an hour, upon our road to Bruges.

CHAPTER II.

Half an hour's ride—Ostend to Bruges—Railroad—Excellent regulations—Appearance of the country—West Flanders, high state of cultivation—Neatness and industry of the people—Bruges—Its ancient splendor and celebrity—Flemings of the Middle Ages—Enthusiasm of our friend—Historical sketch—The sister arts—Church of Notre Dame—Objects of art—Rich ornaments—Carved pulpit—Statue by Michael Angelo—Paintings by old Flemish Masters, &c.

The old canal and its passage boats may now almost be said to form part of the antiquities of Bruges. A new era of steam has given the Belgian movement increased energy and activity; the regulations of the roads, in the hands of the government, are excellent. At once simple and comprehensive, no confusion occurs, accidents are exceedingly rare, the charge of conveyance is low, less than half that in England, and if not quite so rapid, the transit is for most purposes sufficiently expeditious. We had just half an hour's ride of it to Bruges.

The aspect of the country through which the railway passes, like that of West Flanders in general, along the line of coasts, is perfectly flat, and comparatively wild and sterile. We passed considerable tracts of pasture, which, impregnated with the atmosphere and salt of the sea, are peculiarly fitted for grazing, increasing the excellence and flavour of every kind of animal food. I observed also numbers of young horses, and farther on our way sheep and herds of kine, the latter of which, however, were small, and the former not to be placed in comparison, as regards size or condition, with the same kind in England.

The process of draining did not appear to have been applied, as it might have been, with advantage to the pasture soils; but this may also be remarked of the best cultivated districts in Scotland, and even of grazing lands in Great Britain. It is these and the wild tracts of peat or moss on the southern borders and round Verviers, which form the only drawback upon the highly rich and cultivated appearance of the Belgian soil; and this want of cultivation is more apparent than real; undoubtedly they are best adapted to the purposes to which they are applied, and could not without an immense outlay be brought under the same system of artificial cultivation, which renders Flanders, in itself a country of wild and sterile sands, one perfect garden—a comparative paradise of blooms and fruit, the more prized and valuable for its not

being like Italy—mere spontaneous wealth and abundance, to tempt the avarice, and become the spoil of the stranger.

As we proceeded, however, my young friend pointed out to me the gradual changes which began to be seen in the numerous farm houses and country seats, and some ancient castellated residences, which marked our approach to Bruges. Among others which we saw were those of his friend the governor, and the statesman Mulinaere, of M. Potter, and of several members of the Senate, or the Hall of Representatives, more or less distinguished for their active patriotic characters. The appearance of rural prosperity, the result of assiduous neatness, and a kind of incessant study and attention, which embowers the garden in perennial bloom and beauty, and gives to each little cottage-ground and farm fresh plenty and abundance, became on all sides more manifest; there was an increasing population, greater cheerfulness, a more Flemish costume and national manners; and I noticed that they began also to resemble the Germans in their extreme fondness for music. We saw several rustic parties escorting some itinerant musicians, and singing the French vaudevilles, or the favorite songs of their modern poets, with productions also of native talent, which my intelligent companion informed me contained some sly hits at the priests, as well as the Dutch, and without sparing even the policy of the allies.

"There are innumerable national hymns," he added, "of the patriotic kind, peculiar to every town which took part—and which did not?—in the spontaneous rise of Belgium. Look at that young violinist there—he is one of the wounded patriots; he has got an ear though he has lost a leg; and that harpist is his sister, who follows him everywhere. I know the air, and I will endeavour to repeat the words for you, that you may transfer them into the best English you can."

ON THE DUTCH MANIFESTO OF WAR.

And can it be? that he, the wise,
Taught in misfortune's bitterest school,
Dare tempt the vengeance of the skies;
And strike the brave—our tyrant's tool?
The blow is struck; the past is fled!
No more with Nassau's heirs we treat;
The heart of Orange might has bled,
Watering the tree of Freedom's seat.

To you, your country's proudest boast!
I pledge you in these burning tears;
Your patriot souls are never lost
To us,—though not a name appears.
Sleep, martyrs, sleep, beneath the shade
Of your own free and father land;
The monument yourselves have made,—
Your fame to every distant strand.

These lines were pronounced in the original with a fervor and rapidity which astonished me; fire sparkled in the eyes of the speaker; he seemed like one of Collins' Passions, "transported, wrapt, in-

spired;" and much in the predicament of the man in another song with the steam leg, who having once set off, ran in spite of himself, and called in vain for somebody to stop him.

In point of temperament, indeed, most Belgians of high mind, sound education, and general accomplishments, bear considerable resemblance to the French, both in their action and mode of expression; and you cannot live wholly in their society without imbibing something of the same vivacity of manner and even energy of movement. In alluding to this fact, and to the pleasure which I derived from the contrast, my friend endeavoured to account for it on a philosophical principle, which he said had been beautifully explained by the poet Delille, showing the advantages of the social and ardent disposition over the calculating and phlegmatic; and the more pleasurable impressions received from external objects, and from the arts, by minds attuned to a finer sense.

"Malheur aux esprits durs, malheur aux âmes vaines
Qui dédaignent les arts, au temps de leur faveur!
Les beaux arts à leur tour, dans les temps du malheur,
Les livrent sans ressource à leur vile infortune.
Mais avec leurs amis ils font prison commune,
Les suivent dans les champs, et payant leur amour
Consolent leur exile, et chantent leur retour."

"If this sentiment be true, it will be found more peculiarly so with regard to the art of music,—and

of Flemish music, which Guicciardini admits was carried to so high a degree of perfection. Authorities concur in representing the Belgians as the restorers of the lost and degraded arts to Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. So early as the tenth flourished the monk of St. Amand, Hucbald, who invented a system of notation, and introduced the uninterrupted succession of sounds composed of four voices,—of *quintes* on one part, and of *octaves* on the other. Then of Bruges, all the contemporary accounts as early as 1348, show that the city at that early period, was in possession of different schools; and a variety of monuments and names of streets continue to attest the triumph of an art not till afterwards introduced among the Germans. Our Jean le Chartreux was one of its best theoretical benefactors of the fourteenth century. He taught and he wrote upon the art: one of his works is in the British Museum, another in the Vatican, and both are valuable as appertaining to a period of which so little has survived respecting the state of the art. They form the best history of its progress during the middle ages, and all writers on the art particularly refer to the new notation introduced by the monk of St. Amand. His works date about the year 1380.

"Towards the middle of the fifteenth century, among the men of all professions, who, from their high reputation at home, were invited to exercise their arts in other countries—France, England, Ger-

many, and Italy, the masters of this enchanting art were inferior to no other:—a Belgian, Ockeghem, was the first director of the chapel of Charles VII., and the master of a succession of celebrated pupils. He was also chaplain to Louis XI., and treasurer of the Abbey of St. Martin, at Tours. Bavay, in Hainault, had the honour of giving birth, in 1440, to this extraordinary genius, and all his contemporaries speak of him with admiration. Jean Tinctor founded a school of music at Naples; was director of the chapel of king Ferdinand; he was visited by the amateurs of every nation, and his example led to the establishment of numerous other professors at Rome, Milan, and other places. In the Pontifical chapel are preserved many of his compositions, particularly of masses, and a didactic work upon the art, which in those times must, with his splendid talent and example, have exercised the greatest influence. He wrote also on the theory of the proportions of the musical notation, introduced in the fourteenth century; and with indefatigable industry he compiled the first musical dictionary known. This interesting work was published in 1460, under the title of "*Definitorum Terminorum Musicæ*," &c.

"From this great master's school sprung Josquin des Prez, allowed to be the greatest musician of his age; called by the historian Burney, a giant; by another, Princeps Musicorum; and, in the opinion of Zarlino, a man who held the highest rank in his

profession during his entire life. Other countries dispute the honor of having given birth to this extraordinary genius; but Lacroix, Du Maine, Duverdier, and Ronsard, in a Preface to his "*Recueil de Chansons à plusieurs parties,*" addressed to Charles IX., sufficiently vindicate our Belgian claims.

"Next comes the noble Adrien Willaert (1525 to 1560)—called by the Italians themselves *il divino*—director of the chapel of St. Mark, and founder of a school at Venice, which soon filled distant cities with professors and masters, who spread the fame and works of their great Flemish prototype. His pupil Zarlino and all contemporary writers agree in conferring upon him the crown of genius; his example fired the imagination of others, and he was followed by Roland de Lassus, and Philip de Mons, whose popular character and multiplied editions of works evinced the splendor of their talents.

"These and other natives of Flanders became the founders of foreign schools, which long continued to flourish. Cyprien Rore, born at Malines, 1516, formed a new school at Parma, which filled that part of Italy with a succession of distinguished composers and performers in every branch of the art. He also won the appellation of *il divino Cipriano de Rore,* while Roland de Lassus, whose works were stupendous, equalled only by his genius, received from the hands of Maximilian the II. letters patent of nobility.

"In 1547, Waelrant, and some say also *Anselme de*

Flandre, proposed to substitute seven other syllables for the *gamut* of six notes; and it was a Belgian who, long after Gui d'Arezzo, added a seventh to the six notes adopted before. Fifty years afterwards Van de Putte attempted the same in Italy. Henry Dumont, born at Liege, 1610, was the first who in France introduced the continued or running bass into his noblest works.

"Who, in modern times, does not recall with delight the touching, yet skilful compositions of Gretry, and of Gossec, who with Méhul formed that section of the French Institute consecrated to 'La Belle Musique?' I should not yet have done, were I not afraid to weary you only with the list; there is our Mees, born at Brussels, 1760, who became the admiration of Poland itself, so celebrated for musical genius; and on his death in 1820 every class of people united in doing honor to his obsequies, including the grand duke Constantine; for music like his had a charm to soothe, if not civilize, the sternest and most savage mind. We had also the misfortune to lose our Pauwels, of Brussels, when only in his twenty-fifth year,—a genius who combined all the science and studied composition of Mozart and Haydn, with the graceful sweetness of Cimarosa, Päesiello, and Päer.

"The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries equally abound in bright examples honourable to our country. You should hear the compositions of

Jean Noël Hamal, of Liege, who struck out a new path with success, which astonished the most experienced connoisseurs, rising above rules to give additional strength and beauty to the art; and if you listen to the execution of Beriot, admit that in the history of contemporary genius there is little that will bear a comparison with his. His little pupil, Vieuxtemps, yet scarcely eleven years old, surpasses all that we have before heard of in the precocious wonders of the art. It almost startles one to hear him play; to think how such masterly precision, such vigor, such finish, boldness, and passionate expression, should spring from the soul and hand of a mere infant. Lately, too, we have to congratulate ourselves that Joseph Fétis, born at Mons, is come to reside among us: besides his other compositions he has the merit of having commenced the only complete biography which the musical world possesses. The extensive knowledge and varied talents already displayed in this work, promise to confer high advantages upon the art, especially as regards those numerous societies,—musical, poetical, and literary; and our evening concerts, and even *estaminets*, which nowhere abound more than in Belgium. And these are not, as among other people, mere matter of private arrangement to beguile *ennui*, but really popular institutions springing from the heart and spirit of the nation, deeply rooted in every little village and hamlet, which can boast their own societies of

art—poets, painters, and musicians above all, capable of executing the most difficult pieces, and each, 'emula delle trombe, empie le selve,' in generous emulation with its musical neighbour.

"But look at those blooming orchards and gardens which with their pretty castellated residences, succeeding the cottages and farms we have already passed, betoken our approach to Bruges. It is the triumph of art and industry over a niggard soil; how much happier for us than the natural paradise which in vain teems with loveliness and plenty, to court the sickly appetites of the tyrant and his slaves. We are not doomed to behold our harvests, raised from an artificial soil, and the result of enterprise and labor of years, swell the store-houses of needy lords, or become the spoil of a foreign foe. No! not a heart among us but would rather fight the battle over again, even though *le bon Dieu* is impiously said to be *toujours pour les gros bataillons,* as we too frequently experienced from the Spaniard and the Austrian in other times."

"But a truce to other times," I exclaimed; "see you not the beams of yon effulgent sun richly gilding the old towers of Bruges, and here and there reflecting a flood of light in those Gothic windows, and golden fanes, with their grand wrought casements? Heavens! what a splendid effect—those are palace towers indeed! Your Belgian temples, if all like that, may well be called

the giants of the middle ages. With what bold relief yon eagle summit seems to rise above its subject towers, as if to lose itself in that deep blue sky—and how fine the contrast!"

"That is the Clocher de Notre Dame de Bruges, or belfry of our Lady, which yields to few in Flanders. It is seen far off at sea, and serves as a pharos for the vessels coming into the port of Ostend. You will not be disappointed as in Italy with the character of our urban architecture, or the beauty of our suburban villas. It is not I, it is history that says it; read and look, and you will find our Flemish architecture of the middle ages, public and domestic, the most picturesque, if not the noblest in Europe. M. de Reiffenberg* justly remarks, that its magnificent monuments are symbolical of the national character; that those splendid temples, rich town halls, aspiring belfries, and spacious saloons of every kind were only the realization of the two grand ideas that ruled society,—religion and civil polity. Two of the most celebrated abbeys in France were rebuilt in the twelfth century under the direction of Belgian ecclesiastics. St. Geneviève at Paris, was planned by Stephen de Tournay, and St. Denis was the work of Suger de

* To those curious to learn more of Belgian architects, and the dates of the noblest remaining monuments, we may point out an excellent work, entitled, "*Essai sur la Statistique Ancienne de la Belgique.*"

Saint-Omer. At the same period Hucbald, of Liege, was distinguished throughout Europe by the genius and grandeur of his designs, as well as his masterly execution. It is admitted by Hallam, in his excellent work on the Middle Ages, that the art of building with bricks, lost in England from the time of the Romans, was at length restored by the discovery of a Flemish artisan. It was long before the convenience of chimnies was devised, simple as the discovery now appears, the generality of writers making mention of them as posterior only to the thirteenth century. To Belgium the merit of having originated this domestic luxury (in cases where they do not smoke) is chiefly due; and from Flanders it is known to have extended to the adjoining countries. In 1834, on occasion of taking down a wall in the chateau of the counts at Ghent, the workmen found a long flue communicating with the open air; and in the ruins of that of Biersel, near Brussels, built in the twelfth century, there was discovered an open chimney in the grand hall, and another in the kitchen, but only these two.

"In the year 1422, Appelmans, assisted by Amelius, commenced the tower of the grand cathedral at Antwerp, ascertained to be one of the loftiest known. It has only twenty-six metres less than the highest point of the Egyptian pyramids. About the middle of the fifteenth century, Jean Ruysbroeck constructed the tower of the Hotel de Ville, at Brussels, 364 feet high—a work which we shall more

particularly describe hereafter, and which has been emphatically termed, from its severe and studied labor, " the despair of future architects."

"Erasmus Quellyn was another of those great men who, like Michael Angelo, at once painter and architect, acquired a European reputation destined long to endure. François Romain, of Ghent, was invited by Louis XIV. into France to take on himself the direction of public works. He constructed the Pont Royal, and overcame all those natural obstacles considered before insurmountable, and which gave to his triumphant labors the reputation of a miracle. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that in the year 1566, the Royal Exchange of London was erected from plans made by the famous Passchen, of Antwerp,—a magnificent work, but which was destroyed in the great fire of 1666. Another Fleming, Pierre de Wit, constructed the electoral palace at Munich, not surpassed by the noblest in Europe; but such is the throng of brilliant talent that we can barely afford an allusion to some of our great masters—the founders or revivers of this magnificent art. How Flemish genius continued to flourish and adorn the latter part of the eighteenth century, may be seen in the admirable work of M. le Compte de Becdelièvre, who particularly mentions the name of De Wez, the great restorer of the art in Belgium, and also in France, after it had fallen into considerable decay.

"Thus Flanders was not only like Italy, the cradle

of the arts—it had the honor of reviving them; while our rulers, the Comtes Grands Forestiers, dukes of Burgundy and Brabant, were, not always like the princes of other countries, magnificent promoters of the art. The noble edifices we now behold attest the wealth and patriotism of the merchants and tradesmen of Bruges; and the more we examine the more we shall find reason to admire their simplicity of taste, and their ideas of true grandeur. But we are in Bruges—we can judge for ourselves; and let us first direct our steps to the church of Notre Dame—the grandest surviving monument of this famed old capital of West Flanders."

It rose to its present state from a small chapel, built by St. Boniface in 745, and dedicated to the Virgin; its length is 300 feet, and in breadth and height it is equally grand and imposing. The extent of the nave, of the four lower aisles or wings, and of the swelling dome, presents a magnificent coup d'œil, and gives it an air at once picturesque and of peculiar grandeur. The light as we entered from the porch, on raising the curtain, poured in a flood from the lofty windows along the centre, while the vast columns of the aisles, left in dark shadow, gave a depth of chiaroscure to the surrounding objects. It was the sabbath; the bishop in full canonicals was there; they were preparing for the solemnities of high mass; innumerable dark figures that appeared perfectly lifeless, with outstretched arms, covered the rich pavement,—some

prostrated before the images of the virgin, and the most devoted, who had arrived earliest, before that noblest one which, ascribed to the genius of Michael Angelo, seems by the dignity and even majesty of its whole expression to awe you into a belief of its originality. The head of the virgin is full of beauty; the countenance beams with the soul of majestic tenderness and sorrow so finely mingled, that if you gaze intently on it, it involuntarily draws tears,—a truth which my Belgian friend confirmed, and of which he told me more than one affecting instance. There is an expression that anticipates the griefs of the future, that seems to contemplate and to resign itself to them. That of the Infant has also an ineffable charm; the figures are perfect; the drapery of the Virgin displays a wonderful care and finish, which have sometimes led to the doubt of its really being the work of that divine sculptor of Italy.

The manner in which this exquisite statue reached the church of Notre Dame, has been explained by Descamps. It was first executed for the town of Genoa; the vessel which bore it was taken by a Dutch corsair and conveyed to Amsterdam; there a wealthy merchant of Bruges found and purchased it, and upon his return presented it to the church of which he was then churchwarden. Another and not the least proof of its being genuine, however, is the recorded fact of that great amateur, Horace Walpole, having in vain offered

for it the sum of 30,000 florins. Its authenticity nevertheless has been strongly questioned by other parties, among whom Beaucourt attempts to show that it was the work of Pierre De Mouscron, who constructed the marble altar, and by whom it was presented to the chapter. It is not the less a miracle of art.

We next approached the magnificent tomb of the last sovereign of Burgundy, so superbly decorated, enamelled and silver bronzed, the glowing tints of which, in the clear sunlight, gave to the whole a strong relief, singularly contrasted with the severe beauty of the sculpture we had first viewed, and the chaste and simple architecture of the entire edifice. "You behold the tomb of the last of the Paladins, with whom chivalry died,—the ashes of the restless Charles the Bold. See how with their political degradation the architecture of the Flemish people and of the Brugeois, like that of the Florentines—for Bruges was the Florence of Flanders—began to degenerate, and how wide a difference between the styles of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries! What are these rich gilt ornaments, the whole gorgeous monument itself, but an evidence of our decline; our approaching fall under the withering hand of foreign dominion! We were driven from bad to worse, till we reached the climax of national suffering in the unmitigable cruelty of Spanish tyranny and superstition. They were comparatively a lofty race,—an example of nature's nobles,—those

Burgundian princes of ours, when placed by the side of Austrian and Spanish despots. The lovely Mary who here rests by the side of her ill-fated father, by her marriage with Maximilian, brought down a host of woes upon our country, which found their accomplishment in the atrocious policy of Philip II., and the sanguinary deeds of his chief executioner, the duke of Alva. But let us proceed; we are here to study the picturesque; and observe first this "Adoration of the Kings," by G. Seghers, who resided in Italy, and was one of the particular friends of Rubens and Vandyke. He was the brother of Daniel, the Jesuit and the flower painter; realised a handsome fortune by his talents, which he returned to enjoy, and died in his native town about 1651. This is regarded as one of his master-pieces; the composition is good, the design excellent, and the figure of the king is admirably portrayed; and yet in point of expressive genius—that power which startles and arrests, how little can be said of the pieces of Gerard Seghers, or of the Magdalen, or other specimens of J. Maes."

Opposite the first altar is a painting by Pourbus, representing the Virgin, and men and women, probably the family of the Donators, for it was presented to the church in 1579, by a lady, Adrienne Della Corona. The second altar exhibits a painting by Van Oost the younger,—St. Joseph warned by an angel to fly into Egypt; and in a chapel to the right is the Transfiguration, by Pourbus, neither

of which are worthy of particular mention. Entering the third chapel, we noticed another picture of Pourbus—the Last Supper, in which the Saviour is seen supporting his head on the shoulder of his favorite disciple. It is like the former, however, an unequal production, and were it not for the immortal Memling (wrongly spelt Hemlink), whose fine productions gave occasional relief to this mediocrity, and that of the Van Oosts, and particularly in the church and hospital of St. John, we should soon have desisted from a more minute inspection. Jacob Van Oost, however, has a St. Eloi in his bishop's costume; the Virgin and Infant, with St. Catherine presenting a palm; St. Joseph, a portrait of the painter, and St. Peter with the keys in a back ground—a fine composition, and which has altogether a noble and pleasing effect. A Virgin with figures of saints also, by Vanden Berghe, a Brugeois, displays considerable power and beauty of expression. Another, scarcely inferior in point of composition, is by J. Bernaerts, representing the Virgin supported by cherubims, in the act of being received into heaven by the holy Trinity, while St. Magdalen, St. John, Saints Peter and David, are seen prostrated, offering up their prayers. Beneath this is another, supposed to be from the hand of Memling, or at least by one of his school: the Virgin, with scenes from the life of our Saviour; the principal figure arrayed in black, with the hands joined upon her knees,—a work of merit.

A little farther on we entered the chapel called de Lanchals, raised to the memory of the friend of prince Maximilian,—a friend who, in espousing his interests, fell a sacrifice to popular fury, and was beheaded in 1488. The prince himself was thrown into a dungeon; and the monument of this victim of fidelity and affection, to a master he so much loved, is still to be seen. We examined the restorations made by order of Napoleon, when accompanied by his consort Maria Louisa in 1810, he ordered a sum of 10,000 francs to be employed for the embellishment of the chapel. Above the entrance is a small picture on wood, generally attributed to Otto Venius. It represents the mystical marriage of St. Catherine, round whose person is grouped a variety of figures, while soaring in the summit is seen a throng of angels and cherubims.

Passing through the fourth and fifth chapels, I was a little surprised to find them undecorated with paintings of any kind, but behind the great altar we remarked the fine iron gates which close the choir. They bear the date of 1699, the name of the Flemish artisan Ryckham, of Ostend, and are very highly and beautifully wrought.

On coming to the sixth chapel we observed the statue of the Virgin and child—a copy in white marble. It is clearly only a tolerable imitation of the divine statue of Michael Angelo. To the right is a curious picture on wood by Claeyssens. You see upon a mountain a vast throng of

bishops; in the midst of them a pope crowned with his tiara, and engaged in the act of tracing upon the snow the plan of a church; while the rest of the picture represents a town. It conveys the history of the foundation of the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, at Rome. This is real history.

On the same side is seen the famous tribune or pulpit of Gruythuyse, constructed in a piece of solid oak, brought from the Rhine, executed in a Gothic style, very elegant and in complete preservation. At the bottom are richly sculptured the arms of Gruythuyse, surrounded with the collar of the fleece of gold, and having for their supporters two unicorns. The device or motto of this noble house attached to it is "*plus est en vous; meer is in u*," of the old Flemish; and it was a seigneur de Gruythuyse, Louis de Bruges, who obtained permission from the chapter to construct the antique oratory, under the rostrum dated 1472, and it was long made use of by the same family.

Lower down on the same side is a scripture-piece by Pourbus,—the Adoration of the Shepherds, in which he has given the portraits of the famous Josse de Damhouder and his family, painted in 1574. In the light streaming from a beautiful painted window near the oratory of Gruythuyse, we saw this and the adjacent pictures to singular advantage; the infant Jesus receiving his mother into heaven with a re-union of saints, kings, and ecclesiastics; a martyrdom of St. Lawrence, by

Kerkhove; a fine picture of St. Thomas d'Aquinas, in the manner of De Crayer, painted by J. E. Quellyn.* Other specimens by Quellyn the younger, by G. Vroeyelinck, 1620, by Pourbus again, Geeraerts, Martin de Vos, and Michel Coxcie, form part only of the pictorial wealth of this single chapel. In the seventh we found a series of scripture-pieces representing the passion of our Saviour, not inferior in point of design and execution, by Gaeremyn; several by Roose, and others by J. Van Oost the son; and by Herregouts. Still these are not the master-pieces of Flemish painting.

In the eighth chapel we found an altar-piece by Gaeremyn, representing St. Magdalen and other saints, which bears the date of 1769; but it has nothing to distinguish it from the general mediocrity which, as in Italy, stamps the succession of the princes of their schools. Opposite this altar appears a large painting—Elias on the summit of a mountain intently gazing on the enemies who pursued him, and whom he sees destroyed by the fire of heaven. It is by D. Nollet who has succeeded in giving a beautiful tone and character to the landscape.

The ninth chapel exhibits St. Druon on his knees, angels seen hovering over him, by Herregouts the elder. The design is not bad, and the coloring very excellent; and another piece by the

* The friend and pupil of Rubens; he died in 1678.

same master scarcely inferior—St. Dominick praying before the cross.

We had now completed our tour of Notre Dame de Bruges—the grand choir in its dim religious light,—the two magnificent aisles illumined by the splendor of the variegated and deep-stained glass, and we were standing in the great portal before the noble picture of Gasper de Crayer, when the pealing organ, and the rush of devotees towards the high altar, announced that the most imposing of all religious ceremonies was at hand. This we had often witnessed and often described, yet, with the grand accessories by which it is surrounded, it must always exert a powerful influence over imaginative minds; the deep prostration of heart and soul, of the real and existing, with every human faculty, before the unknown and the unseen, the deification of faith in the love of the holy and the beautiful, possess an absorbing charm to awaken sympathy—to extort devotion from the coldest, and feelings of Christian universality, in every just and well regulated mind. Nor till the close of the Catholic service did we resume our examination of Crayer. "That noble head of the virgin," observed my friend, "surrounded by saints, was painted in 1662, when the artist was eighty years of age. Born at Antwerp in 1582, he became a pupil of Raphael Coxcie, at Brussels, and surpassed his master. Never was fortune more propitious to a painter; he was the idol of his age and country; Rubens himself

went specially to Antwerp to see him; his friend Vandyke took his portrait; and his own works, almost innumerable, were sought for by *connoisseurs* from all parts; until he took his rank among the first men of his age. Certainly he has less fire and vigor than Rubens, but his style is more chaste, and his drawing far more correct. He is perhaps beyond any other artist entitled to a comparison with Vandyke; and that is saying a great deal. Indeed it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between these two artists; friends and contemporaries, both carried the school of Rubens to a higher perfection, and both are deservedly honored by their grateful country. A copy of Vandyke, of great beauty, but by whom is unknown, next met our view—St. Rosalie kneeling before the Virgin, who, arrayed in white, holding the infant on her knees, presents a crown of flowers to the saint. Another holy family by J. Maes, has nothing remarkable to arrest attention, but the copies here are all good.

In the nave at the entrance of the choir we again remarked the singular and elaborately carved pulpit—*la chaire de vérité,* very curiously and profusely sculptured in a solid mass of wood. The figure of Religion appears seated on the terrestial globe, supporting it, displaying a bible open upon her knees. An angel kneeling before her is in the act of addressing to her a prayer. Upon the exterior are represented three subjects, in as many square frames sculptured in high relief; our Saviour

preaching on the mount; on the right the Samaritan standing before the well near which Christ is seated; and on the left is seen the Transfiguration. This beautifully wrought *chaire de vérité*, the pulpit of truth, was the work of the sculptor Clauwaert, and executed in the year 1739. In the choir we observed also thirty coats of arms belonging to the chevaliers of the fleece of gold, and painted upon wood. On each side of the great altar is the statue of an angel in white marble, executed by Pepers in a tolerably good style; before it is a fine bas-relief of the Virgin by the same master. In another part was seen a very antique specimen—1430—of fine wrought tapestry, with golden arabesques, bees, butterflies, and flowers, which showed the perfection of this art.

But it is now time to think of Memling and the church of St. John; and we will then take a view of all Belgium from the grand tower of La Halle.

CHAPTER III.

Antique and Modern Bruges—Historians—One-sided Views—Celebrated Men—Traditions—Progress in the Arts—Insurance Companies—Extent of Commerce—Public Edifices—The Town *Hall*—*Institutions* peculiar to Belgium—*English Writers*—*Enthusiasm contagious*—Hospital of St. John—View from the Ramparts—Objects of Curiosity—Private Collections, &c.

THE Florence of West Flanders, and magnificent as Venice herself, of whose greatness Guicciardini and so many writers of the middle ages, including Petrarch, have spoken in terms of eulogium, Bruges now appears to us under very different colors to the emporium of arts and commerce in the golden days of her merchant princes, when she stood foremost among the cities of the world. Whether in regard to historical associations, her popular institutions, or the succession of great men whom she produced, at different epochs, and in every career, she has fallen, like "a city of the dead," into a strange obscurity, as little known to the generality of her inhabitants as to strangers;

a fate which her numerous historians, including the learned Barland, would doubtless have considered more astonishing than the end of the world. The annals of this single town, as my friend, Mr. Grattan, my young Belgian companion, and the admirable author of "Mary of Burgundy" (Mr. James), are well convinced, would furnish materials for volumes, not only *pour servir à l'histoire,* but interesting in themselves; possessing all the charms of romance, combined with that reality which Lord Byron pronounced to be more strange and fascinating than any fiction of the poet.

The singular errors and misconceptions of visitors and strangers appertaining to Belgium, and to this antique city in particular, would be really amusing, if they were not calculated to excite prejudice by their injustice. Even the streets and edifices, hitherto considered its peculiar boast, do not escape; they first are pronounced narrow and crooked; and then we are assured that the Hotel de Ville has only a high lumbering Gothic tower; and that the church-chimes make sad havoc with time, the most discordant music, without the ears of the Belgians informing them that any thing is going wrong, "because the Flemings are by no means a musical people." We are also told that the only objects worth notice in Notre Dame, consist of the Virgin, by Michael Angelo, and the statue of the Father Eternal, by an unknown artist. M. Delepierre very naturally inquires,

whether the author had ever seen Notre Dame, or visited Belgium at all? For further amusing instances, we beg to refer the curious reader to the remarks of that writer; * and perhaps had it not been for the strong national feelings of the count, and his critical acumen, I should not have had my attention drawn to these random shots, at a really ingenious and good-natured people. But I conceive it better policy to pass them over:

"To err is human; to forgive divine,"

and we too, had we not fallen on happier times, or met with friends like our pleasant residents of Antwerp and Liége, by a sort of special Providence, we might have asserted that "the first inauguration of the chevaliers of La Toison d'Or, took place at Notre Dame in 1468, by Charles the Hardy;" and that St. Saviour is the second church worthy of attention, and that it was dedicated to St. Giles. "Yet this precious work, as full of errors as it has words," said the Count, "and studiously running down the Belgian character, as a consequence, was dedicated to the new king, whose enlarged views and excellent disposition—to say nothing of that admirable tact which he has shown on every occasion, that called for its display,—must

* The author of several very interesting works upon Bruges, and other cities, celebrated during the middle ages.

have induced him, like his subjects, to treat it with deserved neglect and contempt. It is always," he continued, "interesting, though painful, to watch the effect of national or private prejudice; and I recollect having met with an article even more ludicrous, from the Dutch press, which, speaking of Bruges, the Liverpool of the middle ages, and which marshalled Ghent, Antwerp, and Brussels, the way to glory, enumerates, among its most precious monuments, the butter market, *het Boterhuis;* then we have the *isolated* tower of La Halle; a *polytechnique* school in the time of the French, and *five* distinguished literary characters, known in Bruges during about the same number of centuries. Here is a publication celebrated throughout Holland and Germany for its scientific and literary acumen; and laying claim to a foreign dress! Can ignorance or party spirit do more?"

My friend Mr. Passavant, the German critic and traveller, in his excellent book entitled, "*Kunstreise durch England und Belgien*" (1833, 8vo.), has given us very able and circumstantial details, connected with objects of art best deserving our attention in this interesting city; and no traveller who aims at just and correct opinions should go without it in his hand. Besides, its public exhibitions and ten churches, containing specimens of painting and antiquities, its private collections, and such of its civil institutions as yet survive, are well worth the diligent inquiry of the intelligent stran-

ger. The artist and the amateur stand in need of no recommendation of this kind; they are too well acquainted with Bruges and the treasures it contains,—with the names of artists eager to raise its modern character; Imbert, Van Acker, and Rudd, who, supported by several spirited societies, by their assiduous study, their travel, and their active talents, have done so much to revive our ideas of the Florence of other days, and with her monuments to vindicate her reviving modern fame.

Scarcely more than six miles from the sea, twelve from Ostend, twenty-seven from Ghent, and sixty from Brussels, Bruges possesses considerable advantages in the new rail-road, the grand canal, capable of admitting large vessels, an increasing population of 45,000 souls, seven principal gates, two hundred streets, and fifty bridges, calculated to facilitate business and general communication. The seat of a provincial government, of the episcopal and archiepiscopal see of Malines; a court of assize and tribunal of commerce;—it is nevertheless only the shadow of its substantial power and greatness, when the counts of Flanders made it their favorite residence; and the dukes of Burgundy held here their splendid courts. Bruges is described by the old historians, Marcantius and Vredius, and in the Life of St. Eloi, by St. Ouen, as early as the year 678. In the tenth century not fewer than six villages are noticed in its immediate vicinity; and, like most other cities, it owed its origin to feudal

power—in other words, to a fortress. "Flanders," says Wastelain, "in the seventh century consisted only of the city of Bruges and its territory;" and Iperius, in his quaint Latin, traces its progress from its castellated form, through all its stages in a very amusing and edifying manner. We only wish we had space for these pleasant old chroniclers,—the true fathers of modern history, and often more to be relied upon than their descendants after all. From the old tradition in Gramaye, we learn that Bruges took its name from the bridge called *Brug-stock*, which conducted its inhabitants to the fairs of Thorout and Rodenbourg; and St. Eloi, who founded the first church—St. Saviour—preached the gospel to the Brugeois on his way to Germany. Charlemagne,—to spite the four sons of Aymon, we suppose—brought a colony of Saxons, those giant Swiss of old times, "to cultivate the sea shore;" and according to the chronicle of St. Bevon, Baldwin, the Iron Arm, came in 865 to establish his residence in the lordly territory, *de Bruges et de Franc.* By espousing a daughter of Charles the Bald, he gradually became master of Flanders, with the title of hereditary *compte souverain*, till the arm of the church militant, too strong even for the iron arm of the warrior king, advanced new claims, and the reign of monkdom and barbarian invasions began.

It was not till Charles the Simple had ceded Neustria, afterwards called Normandy, and also

Brittany to the Chief, Rollon, in 912, that Flanders was delivered from the ravages of foreign foes; when Baldwin the Bald restored its ruined towns; surrounded Bruges with walls,—constructed the Bourg and several city gates. In the tenth century, annual fairs began to be held, civil privileges were obtained, merchants resorted to the *grande place*, and commercial enterprise was fostered under a succession of native chiefs till 1113, when Baldwin à la Hache—the hatchet man—established tribunals of justice, the rights of citizenship, and made the state respected by foreign nations. As a proof of this, it is related by Galbert, in his Life of Charles le Bon, that even the menaces of that monarch were disregarded, when he wished to deprive the Brugeois of the civil privileges they had obtained. By the middle of the eleventh century, Bruges had risen to be a commercial town of considerable importance. The historians Pontanus and Duchêne, describe its progress, its discoveries in the useful arts, and its increasing power with immunities granted by different native princes, who became aware of the advantages of civic rights, industry, and commerce.

The first blow struck at the rising prosperity of Bruges and of West Flanders, of which it formed the head, was by the Austrian Ferdinand, who, as well as his successors, brought war and discord in his train. Of its previous popular character and

institutions, some idea may be formed from the fact of its magistrates having been chosen from the body of the people, and the construction of a Halle, or market-hall, for the use of the citizens and foreign merchants, early in the thirteenth century. The tower of this edifice at first wholly constructed of wood, was in great part destroyed by fire in 1280, and with it the civic titles and privileges of the city were consumed. This led to an attempt by Count Guy de Dampierre to abridge the liberties of the Brugeois, and a serious revolt was the consequence, in which the citizens triumphed.

In 1291, the Halle was reconstructed with bricks, and from that epoch the city continued to increase in wealth and prosperity. It obtained an exemption from the duties on wine, and from the English government the right of free trade in wool and other articles throughout its entire dominion. Philip le Bel left no means untried to ingratiate himself with the Brugeois; he declared war against Guy de Dampierre, and with a view of making himself master of Flanders, guaranteed such of the charters and privileges of the Brugeois as were destroyed by the fire.

It was upon occasion of the subsequent peace, as related by Guicciardini, that the queen of Philip having accompanied her consort into the town where she was surrounded by some of the principal ladies, made the celebrated remark, that "she had

believed she was the only queen present, but from what she saw there were hundreds," meaning, that they were as magnificently attired as herself.

In the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Brugeois obtained letters patent to form an Assurance Company, for the insurance of vessels against fire and shipwreck, as well as of goods by land. The former precincts of the city were soon found too restricted: they were greatly enlarged; and the vast work yet known as the *Minne Water*, and part of the canal to Ghent, were commenced early in the same century. In 1364, two splendid wings were added to the Halle, and it was then that edifice assumed its present noble dimensions, with the exception of the Vieuxbourg, which was added at a later period. It became the general depôt for all kinds of merchandise; the corporations of trades at the same period made an aggregate of 50,000 individuals; and it is added by Gramaye, that they amounted only to one-fourth of the population. Even in the day of her decline, Guicciardini recounts no fewer than sixty-eight different trades or companies. The concourse of foreigners also was immense; there were not less than seventeen consular residences in the city, besides state ministers and princes of other lands; and the masses of free citizens and artisans who could assemble at the sound of the tocsin when rung from the great belfry, sometimes made monarchs themselves feel uneasy, and seek for pretexts to humble the mer-

chant lords who surpassed them in true glory, in the glory of arts and letters, and even in external grandeur and in wealth. It concentrated within itself the commerce of Europe and of the world. In 1388, the English having attacked the Flemish fleet returning with wine from Rochelle, found no fewer than 9000 casks, placed on board a single vessel. It is stated by Meyer, that the great coast trade of Italy, of the Hanseatic towns, and of the Baltic, met in its ports, and he quaintly adds, in a contest of archery held at Tournay, 1393, among 387 bowmen, who came from forty-eight different towns, the Brugeois carried the highest prizes of the day; in so much estimation does the art, as a weapon of war, appear to have been held in the Low countries.

The enormous amount which they often paid for the ransom of their great men, taken in war, supplies another proof, if wanting, of the high degree of prosperity to which free trade, and the ingenuity and industry of the inhabitants, once carried this old Flemish capital. Its public festivals were unequalled, in point of richness and splendor, by those held in the largest capitals of Europe.

In 1429, Philip le Bon, on occasion of his marriage with Isabella, of Portugal, selected Bruges for the scene of his gorgeous spectacles; and there, too, he first instituted the celebrated order of *La Toison d'Or*, or fluce of gold.

The centre of commercial activity and industry

unrivalled; the mart of the south for the Venetians,—of the north for the Hanse towns; the grand reunion of science and the arts, of rank and fashion from every part of Europe, the court of one of the most hospitable and magnificent princes, Bruges offered an example of successful enterprise and of civil freedom, surpassing even the free states of Italy in their palmiest days. It is the opinion of M. Northomb, that we should be astonished if we were rightly informed, how much Europe owes to Belgium for its general civilization; and in particular to Bruges, that miracle of industry and prosperity, in the brilliant epoch of Philip the Good. But it was brief as it was glorious; by the marriage of Maximilian with Mary of Burgundy, Flanders fell under the leaden sway of Austria—of fanatical Spain; and its subsequent history, like the decline and fall of Bruges—written in characters of blood,—is but too universally known in the history of modern Europe.

To return then to the Halle,—in 1493, its grand tower was struck by lightning, and a great portion, including the roof of the public prison, at some distance, was consumed. On its restoration the spire was composed of wood; another conflagration occurred in 1741, and it was replaced by other materials; and finally the octagonal crown or summit of the edifice, taken from a roof which had been removed in 1822, as it now appears, with the restoration of the superior balustrade, completed

this splendid work. The appearance of the Gothic tower from the *Grande Place* where the Halle is situated is now highly picturesque; two wings are appropriated to a large market for meat,—the third to the municipal bureaux, and a *corps de garde.* The centre court is the linen market, as it is here represented, and occupies a fine open area, the entire stage of these four portions of the edifice forming one spacious gallery, in which the annual fair is also held, in the month of May. The belfry, contains forty-seven bells, of vast dimensions, which play carillons four times the hour, by means of an enormous brass cylinder; and the chime is considered one of the most varied as well as correct and full that are known in Europe. The view from the summit of the tower over a vast extent of coast, inland scenery, towns, and cities,—particularly on a fine clear day, as we saw it,—is at once picturesque and magnificent;—from the extent to which the eye is carried over a flat country;—and the mighty ocean losing itself in the far horizon. *La Halle aux draps*, or linen market, is a modern building, occupying the eastern side of the *Grande Place;* and in its architecture presents some points of resemblance to the palace of the Tuilleries. It was erected in 1789, upon the site of the ancient *Halle aux Draps*, or *Water-Halle,* so named from its having been built upon the canal; where merchant vessels could be brought under large vaulted galleries, to take up or discharge their cargoes.

Opposite this edifice are to be seen the remains of those fine Gothic buildings, which once gave a more imposing effect to the *Grande Place*. Separated only by a little street from *Craenenburg*, the prison of Maximilian, *La Maison en briques* forming part of them, till lately in rapid decay, was most probably the *rendezvous* of the princes in the season of festivals and games; and this singular relic has fortunately been preserved and restored, so as to give some idea of the grand architecture of those enterprising and brilliant days.*

L'Hôtel de Ville, built on the site of the *Schepenhuys*, or house of the sheriffs, in 1377, was first founded as early as 865, by Baldwin Bras de Fer, or the iron arm. It is a fine Gothic edifice, having six towers, two of the summits of which bore formerly each a gilded brazen crown. The façade exhibits six grand windows, and is richly supplied with niches, where formerly the statues of saints, and counts and countesses of the country, were displayed. The great hall, lighted by four of these noble windows, contains the public library, which is composed of 7932 volumes, including printed books and manuscripts, some of which are of extreme value and rarity. The centres of the vaulted platform are filled with scripture-pieces

* The house in the *grande place* at the corner of the Rue St. Amand, was inhabited by Charles II. during his exile, and as if to console him for the loss of his regal title, the citizens elected him "King of the Company of Cross-bowmen,"—*Roi des Arbalétriers.*

from the New Testament. From the curious brazen balcony were issued of old the civil laws and ordonnances of the magistrates. Here and there you see a good painting, but they are few and far between—by Claeyssens and Achtschelling, and one or two copies of Teniers and Vandyke. There are also some portraits;—of Maria Teresa, and of Napoleon, as first consul,—the first by De Visch, the second by De Vien; a St. Martin, by Van Oost the father, and others still less worthy of remark.

We next turned our steps towards the church and hospital of St. John, so long celebrated as a charitable institution, under the direction of the *Administration des Hospices,* and in which ladies even of the first rank, as sisters of charity, have conducted the establishment of the sick. The first sight of this interesting spot, brought to mind the genius and fortunes of the celebrated Memling—one of those intellectual princes of the earth whose kingdom, like their Saviour's, is not of this world, and who, like Camöens, Cervantes, and Tasso, appear for a few moments to astonish and delight us, and after their triumphs of mind are achieved,—the reflection of some greater and more beautiful state of being on our own—spring from the fiery ordeal of their trials to some loftier and more congenial sphere. "You ought to see the paintings of our Memling," observed my friend; "the very place where he sought refuge from the storms of life, and which he immortalized by his creations, seems to

have inspired you as it should all; and as it did a countryman of yours who is almost one of us in heart and spirit—whose works I have read with pleasure;—I mean Mr. Grattan." "His Heiress of Bruges,—his Sisters of Charity," I replied, "are portraits perfect in their kind; and his descriptions are true landscapes. And you must learn to admire another of my countrymen, Mr. James, the happiest historian, perhaps, of Mary of Burgundy; nor ought the highly-gifted writer of the 'Princess,' the inimitable novelist, and best historian of her country, Lady Morgan, to be forgotten. They have all sought to do justice to Flemish genius, and what is better, to Flemish truth, and patriotism, and worth." "And they are the adopted children of our mother-land; they are our brothers and our sisters; England and Belgium are kindred spirits," was the enthusiastic answer of the young Belgian count.

In 1275, a canon of Tournay named Arnoud, endowed a hospital at Maldeghem, but afterwards transferred the grant to that of Bruges, on condition that the patients of the former should be received there—a practice continued up to this day.

About 1397, the brothers and sisters of whom the society consisted, obtained authority to constitute themselves a religious body, according to the rule of St. Augustin. At present it consists simply of a sisterhood. The best professors of the medical art regularly attend to give them aid. Many youthful

faces of the sisters wore a strange contrast with their sombre costume and the sad offices they so zealously performed. "The heart of woman," I exclaimed, "uncorrupted by man, is the retreat of all goodness and tenderness, from which it dispenses continual blessings, and watches as a guardian angel over the sorrows of humanity. Can the harshest nature resist her looks of exquisite sympathy and kindness; her soul of goodness, in ever active beneficence? whom no toils can subdue, no dangers and no pains appal, when inspired by her native innocent spirit—'open as day to melting charity.'"

"Thank you a thousand times, my dear friend; you express all I could wish to feel on entering a spot sacred to woman's virtues, and to heaven, like this. You deserve to see Memling and his sisters, for I can never consider them apart."

One of the sisterhood ran hastily by us, and as we entered, I met the looks of a man evidently dying, intently bent on the door by which she had disappeared. He was looking for her return, and in that look, which appeared to follow us wherever we turned, there was a wild and restless anxiety which was allayed only when she re-entered, bearing a small crucifix and water; she was soon followed by the officiating priest.

We had no wish to examine the *copies* of Rubens, Vandyke, or Teniers; or any productions of the Van Oosts, or of inferior painters; we hastened at once to the master-pieces of Memling's hand. The

first specimen we observed, was the famous shrine of St. Ursula: upon the panels of the coffer which contains it, the artist has painted his martyrdom of the 11,000 virgins, in different compartments. The St. Ursula is a series of histories exquisite in finish; full of the austere beauty and melancholy moral of Christian art. The expression and the grouping are both admirable; and it is altogether one of the most curious and rare productions, for that period of the art, of which Bruges can boast. Some slight portions, which had suffered, were, in the year 1826, retouched, with extreme care, and even abstinence, by the able Mr. Laurent; and on the same subject the baron de Keverberg composed a kind of romance—*Ursula Princesse Britannique*, with the express view of giving artistical and historical details regarding Hans Memling and this single work. But it is in itself a history,—a series of startling events, calculated, in the opinion of Professor Loebel, to awaken the admiration of all those who study the epoch when Memling lived,—when the arts had scarcely emerged from the barbarism of ages. A shrine of solid silver was offered to the governors in exchange for it; but it was very properly declined.

Next in the hall of meeting we saw another splendid example—the *chef d'œuvre*—of the same master. It bears the date of 1379; and represents the Virgin upon a throne with the Infant, in the act of placing a ring upon the finger of St. Catherine. The two Saints John—the precursor and the

evangelist, St. Barbara and angels, form the accessories. On the right of the principal group, in a separate wing, is represented the decollation of St. John the baptist, and St. John the evangelist at Patmos; and on the left, scenes from the Apocalypse, and St. John seen in the act of composing it. Every part of these three subjects is treated in the most perfect manner; the heads are elegant; and all perhaps that a critical eye can detect, is a slight want of gracefulness and contour, or breadth in the design.*

* "The beauty and expression of the heads painted with all the *finesse* of miniature, notwithstanding the remote and rude period of the art in which they were executed, recalled the portraits of Vandyke, and in some particulars perhaps surpassed them. What sublimity, what high intellectual character in those noble but melancholy countenances!

Hemlink was his own master, as the story goes. He had enrolled himself a ~~single~~ soldier in our troops, and fought hard, I warrant, for the independence of Flanders, against the Philips and the Louises, until worn out with fatigue, wounds, and what not, he came poor, sick, and suffering, to our gates. Belgium had always her *blessés, voyez vous!* Well, here he was; the sisters of St. Augustine showed the very ward and bed where he lay; for we *béguines* do duty here for sweet Jesus' sake. The hospital by right is served by the *Sœurs Augustines*, but they are too few and scattered to do duty. John Hemlink, rest his soul, recovered slowly; and was wont to sit under the portico where you passed the patients; and he there began to draw little miniatures, and executed that shrine of St. Ursula, which people came far and near to see, till our little chapel became another Loretto. Who but John Hemlink now! The town grew proud of him, and the magistrates gave him his *congé;* and it was in gratitude for the charity he received here, that he painted this picture for our hall. And here, Messieurs, he is himself—'quel joli garçon!' She drew aside a curtain as she spoke, and the handsome head and figure of the painter, in the dress of the patients of the hospital, stood out from its back-

We passed over several specimens said to be by a pupil of the great painter, by Jean Florens, or Van der Rys, the portraits of the ancient governors, by Van Oost and others; some pieces in the manner of Claeyssens, Rameau the "Sibylla Sambethra," erroneously attributed to Memling himself, and some large *bas-reliefs* in stone; not undeserving of attention anywhere except in presence of the master-pieces of the painter of the church and hospital of St. John.

In the interior of the hospital is an apothecary's establishment, of which the sisters have the entire direction.* The order and arrangement are both

ground, and appeared almost to meet the admiration it elicits from the spectator. Underneath was inscribed, 'Opus *Johannis Hemlink*, 1379.' What immortality of genius!"—*Lady Morgan.*

There is a great deal of truth, with a little fanciful coloring in the beautiful description here given of the genius and fortunes of the painter citizen of the world,—the soldier, the pilgrim, and the hospital patient, Hans Memling; for Emeling, or Memling—not Hemlink—is the right spelling of the name by which he went. Strange, however, that the most powerful and truth-telling portrait which the writer ever witnessed—not excepting the living specimens of Vandyke, in Ghent, Antwerp, and in the palace of the Prince of Orange—is that magnificent portrait—so little noticed—painted by the artist of St. John's of himself, in the character of an aged man—an affecting contrast to those he has introduced elsewhere—seen in the act of contemplating a skull, the expression of which no one can study without being strongly reminded of the character and incidents in the play of Hamlet.

* The large open hall, partitioned into wards and dormitories, and with a kitchen—all for the use of patients, is conducted as it has been for *centuries*, with the utmost neatness, good order, and prompt attention. It is a spacious vaulted room, with Gothic pillars, apparently in the same state as when Memling was received

admirable; and here, too, we noticed other paintings by Claeyssens, representing, among other scriptural pieces, our Saviour bearing his cross to mount Calvary.

We now took leave of the *sœurs hospitalliers*, the noble Béguines, in order, before joining our table d'hôte, to take the tour of the ramparts, where we saw the entire city, as if drawn on a map immediately below our eyes. We had next to visit the Palace of Justice, five or six private collections, the Royal Academy, the Institution for the Blind and Dumb; the Athénée, and *Ecoles Gardiennes;* the Episcopal Palace, the Seminary, and a throng of other churches.

one of its inmates. Like the institution itself, it seems peculiar to Belgium, as an example of the perpetuity of a society founded upon truly Christian and beneficent principles, without reference to creed or nation.

CHAPTER IV.

The Royal Academy—Picture of Memling—Other Works of Art—Engravings and Prints—Eminent Engravers—Spirit of Trade and Commerce—Old Palace of Justice—Paintings—Conversations—Opinions of an Amateur—National Traits—La Fontaine—Specimens and Examples—Early Flemish Discoveries—First Landscape—Vander Meulen—Battle-pieces.

THE Royal Academy of Bruges, supported by the government, contains a school of painting, sculpture, and architecture, which has produced several distinguished pupils; and, among its other treasures of art, may be seen one or two noble specimens of Van Eyke. The head of our Saviour, bearing the date of 1440, is full of grandeur; a portrait of the painter's wife, 1439, is admirable in its style; and a third, the Virgin with the Infant, seated upon a throne, with saints George and Donatus, 1436, is an exquisite work in every particular, as regards design, high finish, and its unrivalled colors. The Baptism of Christ, by Memling, is another splendid specimen of the art; the expression of the head

and features of the Saviour are irresistibly beautiful, —gentle and humble, yet noble in the highest degree. Like our friend, Mr. Passevant, we found it impossible, while contemplating these divine works of the great masters, to derive pleasure from those of an inferior character; and we passed over the St. Christopher, erroneously attributed to the same master, some specimens of Claeyssens, Van Oost, Diepenbecke, Pourbus, Minderhont, Wynkleman, and some modern artists. One of the latter, by Kinson, painter to the court of Versailles, representing Belisarius returned to his family, and witnessing the death of his wife, dying of grief, is treated with great truth and care; as are also several specimens of sculpture, and in particular one from the hand of M. Geefe, *La Chrétienne Mourante*, presented by him to the Academy, and every way worthy of his unquestionable genius.

With an enthusiasm almost idolatrous, Flanders, like Italy, raised altars to all the sister arts, of which their presiding ministers, by their incessant labors, spread the same catholic veneration, and threw the same religious halo round their worship in other countries. In every great town—and there are only great towns, stamped with the impress of a grander age in Belgium —the archives of every seat of art, public exhibitions, and private collections, contain innumerable and splendid examples, which prove the general and simultaneous impulse given throughout

and beyond the middle ages, even to the subordinate branches of the fine and the useful arts. Holland, rich as she was in like treasures, is indebted to Flanders for some of her finest monuments. When her grand admirals had raised her glory to a height that threatened to eclipse the fame of England, it was a Fleming, Rombaut Verhulst, born at Malines, 1633, whom the republic invited to raise statues to their memory. In the national mausoleum of our own great men at Westminster Abbey, upwards of twenty of the noblest monuments are the work of two sculptors of Antwerp; Schurmaecken and Rysbrack.

Then look at the admirable works of Vander Meulen, sought no less by strangers than by his own countrymen. How perfect the illusion! How delightful to the lover of nature, and to the eye of taste! The very flowers and leaves seem to invite you to wreathe them into garlands, and the fruits to gather and taste them; its birds, animals, sea-fish, and other objects of nature, are not less exquisitely true and natural. In mirrors and picture frames he displayed the same truth, amounting to a delightful illusion in all he touched. In a higher walk, Calloigne and Kessels gave a new soul to sculpture; the admiration of their own country, and of Italy; and in Rome itself, where Canova, Thorwaldsen, and Gibson, had each displayed their master-works, the youthful Kessels carried the first prize in the academy, opposed to the best pupil of

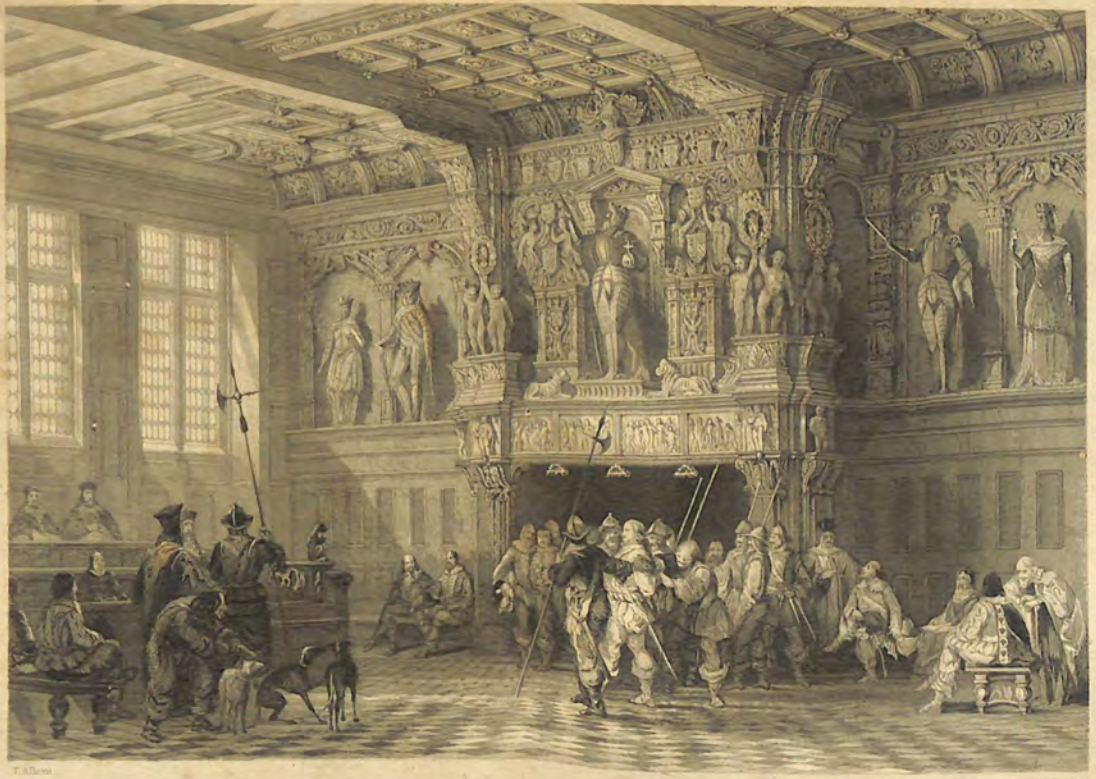
the celebrated Italian. A premature death denied him his full fame, and the honors then preparing for him by his admiring countrymen. Calloigne continued his career with brilliant success; bore away the first prizes in Paris, and then distinguished himself at Rome. His sculpture is perfect in its design, nor less remarkable for its grace and beauty. His *Venus sortant de la Mer*, does him lasting honor; and no Fleming can behold his statues of Van Eyck, of Count Egmont—to say nothing of the noble Socrates, and some bas-reliefs, which place him in the first rank of his country's artists—without emotion. Nor should the works of M. Eugene Simonis, a young Liegois, be passed over without the praise due to his merit.

To speak of the works of Geefe in a sketch like this would be injustice, opening, as they do, a new leaf in the history of the art,—a school for native and foreign talent, which renders the contemplation of his studio more valuable than any series of lectures, from the most eloquent lips. We could spend days, instead of hours, there with delight.

In the art of engraving, likewise, Belgium, as is well known, may claim precedence, even in times when it was carried by Italy and Germany to its highest degree of perfection. M. Huber in his *Notices générales des graveurs, divisés pur nations,* (Dresden, 1787,) makes use of the following remarkable words, which place the subject in a clear point of view, and the claims of Flemish genius

beyond dispute. "It is impossible to deny the surpassing merit of the Flemish engravers over those of all other nations; they have by themselves supplied every want, in regard to this wonderful and delightful power of multiplying beauty without restraint, which can be asked by the most fastidious amateurs. In fact," continues this admirable foreign critic and connoisseur, "can we estimate the power of the burin developed by Golzius and his disciples? What easy vigor in the engravers of Rubens and his school! What undreamed-of magic of light and shade—of the untried powers of contrast in Rembrandt, and his followers! What admirable finish and clearness of execution in the work of Edelinck! Posterity has made a just estimate; the price she has now affixed to these splendid reproductions of the great masters, for ever decides the question of their relative superiority." If Fineguerra of Italy made the discovery, Schoonbauer, the master of Albert Durer, first practised the art of engraving upon copper, and presented fac-similes of the giant minds of Italy to his astonished countrymen. In the succeeding century, Belgium produced a succession of distinguished engravers;—Jerome Coek, Theodore Debry, Suavius, Bruyn, Gheraerd, Custos De Gheyn, and in particular Jean and Raphael Sadeler. Before the end of the seventeenth century, this truly Flemish art had reached its acme; Leeu even succeeded in discovering a new kind, calculated to reproduce the semblance and effect of

colored paintings. Pontius has thus immortalized Rubens and other great masters, in a strength and vividness of impression which seems to put their beauty and perfection in a more distinct point of view. If we had only space to report the names of the great landscape engravers, the contemporaries and followers of Sadeler, called the phœnix of the art, we should surprise some of our modern artists and even amateurs, who are not all of them perhaps aware, how, within half a day's sail of them, in a country of English tastes and feelings, there lie enshrined treasures of this divine art, in all its branches and varieties,—the public press of the arts which has at once secured and immortalized the productions of Italian and Flemish masters which might have become extinct. Antwerp was the cradle of its power; but Liège spread its fame throughout the land. Valdor, Warin, and Duvivier, acquired their reputation in Paris; and to Gilles du Marteau we owe the invention of engraving in mezzotinto, or, as the French call it, *la manière noire.* Valdor was selected by Louis XIV. for a series of historical subjects. Warin made great improvements in the engraving of medals and coin; and even the caustic and satirical Voltaire in his history of that monarch observes: "We have equalled the ancients in regard to medals. Warin was the first who raised this art from the mediocrity in which it stood, towards the close of the reign of Louis XIII. Duvivier, another Liegeois, was engraver to the court



T. Allom

R. Wallis

Peace & Justice with four Cornish Chimneys

Bridges

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of Louis XV. After the death of that artist, M. de Marigny, being consulted by the king on the choice of a new engraver, advised his Majesty to defer the selection, in the hope of finding another of his countrymen; for that it was only by the artists of that nation that apparently good likenesses were taken.

The Palace of Justice, erected in 1722, on the east side of the town—formerly Palais du Franc de Bruges, (the Liberty,) forming an independent district, was given up by Philip the Good to the magistracy of the Franc de Bruges. It presents nothing very remarkable in the façade, but in the work of Sanderus, where you see a full representation of the ancient edifice, it is different. As represented also in the accompanying view, it serves to convey, both in point of character and costume, a perfect and lively idea of the scene it once exhibited, in the palmier days of Flemish law and justice. It is the interior which deserves the study of the antiquary; and among other objects of art he will remark, in one of the halls, the grand chimney-piece, so admirably sculptured in wood as to astonish the connoisseurs of every country. A fine *alto relievo*, it also produces the impression on the eye of a grand historic painting in wood. From a date upon one of the sides it appears that this elaborate work was executed in the year 1529. The genii and the bas-reliefs which adorn the frieze, are all in white marble; and

represent, with equal care, the history of Susannah. The stately figure in the centre is meant for Charles V.; on his left are seen the statues of Maximilian, and of Mary of Burgundy; on the right, those of Charles the Bold, and Margaret of England, his third wife. Upon the two sides, above these figures, are given the emblems and coats of arms of Spain, Burgundy, Brabant, and Flanders, all finished with an exquisite degree of art.

Here, too, besides a series of portraits of Spanish sovereigns, is preserved a large painting by Van Oost, the son, chiefly distinguished for the exquisite truth of the fleshes, and the vivacity of the coloring. In the hall now appropriated to the use of the police, is another picture by J. Van Oost, the father, which represents a criminal, and in which it is said are also represented the portraits of the judges who lived at the period of the trial. The back-ground gives a view of the hall to which we have alluded, and it may be observed that it has very little changed its appearance. Over the chimney itself is seen a fine landscape, by Joseph de Momper, with figures and animals by Breughel de Velours, in that peculiarly happy style—the model of our Landseers of the present day,—which then came so much into vogue.

In the chamber where the judges assemble previous to holding their sessions, there is a splendid view of the town, as it appeared at that period, with its now antique aspect and picturesque character

fresh upon it. It is interesting to contrast the past with the present, and observe the numerous changes and dilapidations which have rendered the latter a comparatively grand ruin; the sad, but picturesque cemetery of its own fortunes. Over the chimney of the Hall of the Tribunal appears an allegorical picture of some merit, which represents Philip the Good seated on a throne, in the act of granting a charter, bearing the date of 1435; and farther on, in the chamber of advocates, we noticed a painting of the Decapitation of St. John, tolerably well executed, and other specimens, chiefly copies of older masters by Gaeremyn and Suvée, besides some portraits of Spanish sovereigns, and two or three landscapes. In this palace are also found deposited, the provincial archives, among which are contained charters, which may be traced back to the twelfth century, and they are almost innumerable.

No amateur who delights in viewing select specimens, instead of a mixed character, will fail to visit M. Chantrell's collection of sketches by Rubens, and some admirable prints by the early masters. We found that of M. Steinmetz equally rich in paintings and in prints, in the German, Dutch, and Italian schools. Add to these the several collections of Messrs. Vanden-Bussche, Puyenbeke, and Baron de Marenzi, which exhibit some rare and excellent specimens of the arts in their different stages, which would agreeably occupy not only hours, but days, and even weeks in the

opinion of genuine connoisseurs, and all who have the happiness to possess a taste for them. "You will now be enabled," said the Count, "to form some idea of old Flemish art, and to acquit Lanzi of any desire to depreciate its excellence. Nay, I trust to make a convert of you, to all my Flemish doctrines, before you join your friends at Liége. We will go together; at every step, you will see something worth your notice, and you will oblige me," he added, "for I will show you our *schools* of painting, as we are not singular, 'our name is legion;' from fine old Van Eyke, to my studious friend and true scholar De Keyser. There is also Geefe, too, and his studio, full of classic models,—I mean his own,—there is Verbeckhoeven, the very Landseer of Belgium, and our provinces have each their painters and their pupils, who, if not as successful as they deserve, have less to blame themselves, their genius, or their talents, than the adverse spirit of their age. It is the same with your historical painters, it is only when your artists reflect your own likeness, and something better, perhaps, that they are really popular with you. I think that of the two, we are the more just; look at your John Martin, how he was received here; his Belgian reputation is perhaps worth more than his English, though that deservedly stands high. But the stream of emigration in art, as in every thing else, is from you and towards your colonies, or us younger resuscitated states. And this is

honorable for you; Britain is the foster mother of many lands, of the peaceful arts, and of a certain degree of freedom, not well defined indeed, but good as compared with the absolutism so oppressive in other parts. She is the arbitress of Europe, and the hope of the world."

I made the Count a profound obeisance, when he added, with a malicious smile; "but you are without a pictorial history; you must still visit Italy and Flanders if you wish to have it; Bruges, Brussels, and Antwerp abound with native masters, who yield to none. If we have no Michael Angelo, and no Raphael, we need not shrink from a comparison with any other names. Fix your eye steadily a few minutes on our old Van Eycks, study our Memling, our Rubens, and he who combined the merits of all, the universal Van Dyke, and mark how boldly they confront the Giottos, the disciples of Perugino, Titian himself, Paul Veronese, Guido, and the Carracci. While they have nothing to confound them even with Rembrandt, much less the second-rate Dutch, with the Ostades or the Brouwers. See our Vandyke at Ghent, and some of those noble portraits, carrying us back to the moral grandeur, the stern heroic devotion of a different age, which impress a glory on his saints, and radiate from the noble heads which give life to the walls of the palace of the prince at Brussels. Compared with these, what are the Dutch but models of their own *bambocciati?* Our Flemish painters, inspired by

the example of Rubens, Vandyke, and Miele, travelled, were men of the world, and carried art and civilization into other lands. But the Dutch masters, still more than the French and English, almost invariably remained at home." I ventured to remind the young enthusiast of his country's art; of not a few French, English, and even Dutch masters who had travelled, and instanced the name of Wander, no inappropriate one for the occasion. "They are examples I grant," was the ingenious reply, "but only to prove the truth of my general observation; and what was the use of travel, when they all returned home, more English, French, and Dutch, and yet more *bambocciati*, if I may so say, than when they left it. It was different with the Flemish school; who was the master of Guido, and first put him into the right path, but our Calvert Il Fiamingo of Italy? Our Luigi Pozzo was the best landscape painter of his day; and Brill was better known in Venice and over all Italy than many great Italians themselves. Our David Teniers is in himself a host; and our Crayer and Jordaens, both masters in their several lines." "Still," I observed, "we ought not to forget there have lived such men as Rembrandt, Paul Potter, and Gerard Dow."

"I know and appreciate them," was the Count's reply, "I do not deny that they possessed positive merit, but of a different, and I believe, inferior kind. In our Flemish School, as in those of Italy,

however, there is a splendor and a charm peculiar to them, and in both, I conceive, national and original. And of both we may aver with the felicitous enthusiasm of La Fontaine, the happy poet of painting, in words which express the spirit of our Flemish art:

'A de simples couleurs cet art plein de magie
Sait donner du relief, de l'âme et de la vie.
Ce n'est qu'une toile, et l'on croit voir un corps.
Il évoque à son gré les vivants et les morts;
Il transporte les yeux aux confins de la terre,
Il n'est événement, ni d'amour ni de guerre
Que cet art n'ait enfin appris à tous les yeux.'

"You smile," he continued, "at my French, or perhaps at my too great ardor of nationality, when speaking of our old masters, and the respect with which I view the efforts of some of my living countrymen; for if you have some good names in England, we too have our Wappers, our Verbeckhoven, De Keysers, Navez, the Brakeleer, the Paelinck, and the Van Hanselaere, and more, who make worthy essays to maintain the celebrity of our bold and truthful national school. "The history of Flemish art is that also of discovery itself. Both Vasari, himself a painter, and the historian Guicciardini, attribute to us that of painting upon glass, and of carrying it to the highest degree of perfection; in which art Von Hort, a citizen of Antwerp, distinguished himself above all others.

"M. de Reiffenberg has proved, against the

assertions of Heylen, the justice of the Flemish claims on this point, anterior to the reign of Charles V. Van Eyck was the inventor of a colored glass of an extraordinary strength and vividness, subsequently introduced into France, and in the sixteenth century into Italy. Who has not admired the sombre beauty, the grand reflected lights of the glass in St. Gudule at Brussels, painted by Jean Ack, of Antwerp, by Jean Floris, and by Diepenbecke. The beautiful specimens at Tongerloo, and other places, which show the triumph of this art, are scarcely inferior; but so eagerly were they sought by other nations, that Belgium was soon deprived of her earliest and finest products. Those of Hoefnagel carried a high price, and were preferred by judges to those of the Dutch Van Donder, or the Volsak's of Germany. Miniature, in fact, was long perfected to admiration in Flanders, while in France and other countries it was a mere cold exhibition of raw colors. "It is still more indisputable, that Belgium and the world are indebted to Van Eyck for the grand discovery of painting in oil. Certain methods, indeed, of applying oils to paintings were known; but the grand art of mingling and using them so as to produce new results was Van Eyck's; that of carrying it to further perfection was due to Jean de Bruges.

Subsequent to the fortunate discovery by Van Eyck, an artist of Dinant, named Patinier, towards

the beginning of the sixteenth century, was the first Flemish artist who made landscape his study, and who constituted it a principal object, instead of a mere accessary as we see it in the early history pieces and holy families, by the great painters of Italy. This was a bold innovation for the day in which he lived; but his genius triumphed, and his works were soon received and imitated with enthusiasm.

And again, in another branch, Flemish originality may be established by the testimony of history. Look at the works of our Vander Meulen, who, emulous of Michael Angelo himself, painted battle pieces, like a hero of the pencil, and held forth models to Le Brun and his disciples, for the representation of the godlike Alexander taming those fiery steeds, which convey all the ideas of a perfect living reality."

CHAPTER V.

Route from Bruges to Ghent—Incidents by the Way—Literary Horrors —National Manners—Practical Jests—A Mad Professor—Odd Style of Improvising—Menapian Hams—Roman Gourmands—Pickled Curls and Herrings—Flemish Economists—and Dutch—Approach to Ghent—Public Works—The Grand Canal, &c.

A PLEASANT ride, of little more than an hour, through the same highly-cultivated but rather more wooded and diversified tracts of country, quickly transferred us from Bruges to Ghent. If agriculture be the true foundation of national wealth the Flemings deserve to be prosperous; but they want commerce, and ports, and colonial markets; for, though agriculture may be an admirable foundation, commerce must build up the social edifice (to be worth living in), as they are perfectly aware from history and experience, that a commercial people are not only more wealthy, but that they create wealth, and become the real civilizers of the world. From the discussions which we had subsequently the pleasure of hearing, both in the chamber of deputies and in the senate, and from a knowledge of some projected measures, then under deli-

beration, it was the decided impression of my friend, of the correctness of which I could hardly form a judgment, that the Belgian movement would yet be followed by its just and natural advantages. This time and events only can decide.

It was a fine Sunday afternoon; we had just partaken of the best *Table d'Hote*—that of the hospitable mansion of M. de L. where we found a kind of Moselle Champagne and a Burgundy, *not popular* even in the first hotels, if we except perhaps the "Belvidere," and "L'Europe," at Brussels. The towns-people, in holiday-costume, were strolling by the line, or amusing themselves at the different stations, chatting, seeing their friends into the diligences, taking their short cuts from town to town, or from friend to friend, as if a dozen or two of miles were of no consideration; and there certainly is very little damage to the purse-strings, except for the poorest of the operatives, and tillers of the soil. Our friends of Bruges had supplied us with an excellent receipt for good humor, if not for happy observation, at least for some hours to come; who would be ingrate enough to sleep on Moselle and Burgundy? And we had two or three amusing fellow-travellers in the same mood, which brought out their true Belgian peculiarities admirably. It was a highly graphic and festive scene, that which followed, the more from my companion's acquaintance with Professor G.—not one of your serious starched professors of the old school, but a sparkling and exuberant

wit, a poet, an *improviser*, and in the acmé of his intellectual glory—when inspired by Champagne or Burgundy, a perfect personification of "laughter holding both his sides." I had no idea of the happy Belgian character in the middle and higher ranks previous to that afternoon—I mean in its favorable moments, though I had seen a good deal of its national and class characteristics; but now we should have furnished a good conversation piece, and a music-lesson too, for some of the old Flemish masters. A splendid and spacious carriage, as easy and luxurious as sitting in a saloon, with the advantage of getting along; the Professor, "no ethereal essence of earth's mould," no pale and abstract ideal, but full, florid, and well-fed enough to grace one of our agricultural prize-meetings; his friend, a tall and portly merchant of Ghent, middle-aged, fair like his Saxon race, round and ruddy, gold chains round his neck, rings on his fingers, and, *mirabile dictu*, gold earrings too, as large as a lady's brooch glittering down his rubicund cheeks, and giving an odd kind of relief to his whole physiognomy.

Then think for a moment of a proprietor, editor, critic, and author—nay, a comedian and satirist of course, if not a deadly lampooner, and, for aught I know, like M. de Gendebien, a deadly shot—all in one and the same awful person. I thought at once of the "awfu' woman," so well done in old days by our excellent and lamented Matthews, for the critic also had his earrings; but which, in-

stead of exciting a smile with the sound of his name, sent a kind of chill through my before genial spirit. I was instantly on my defence; for, spite of his Flemish French, *M. l'Anglois,* was sufficiently manifest; and but for the old Belgian courtesy, and the generous friendship of M. le Comte, I might have been voted *de trop,* or the mark of a certain degree of concealed satire.

The presence of my friend, and the jeux d'ésprit and the marked politeness of the editorial critic soon disarmed my reserve; and, as if to put me completely at my ease, he soon afterwards fell asleep. It was then we truly enjoyed the scene that followed, and which we kept up at Ghent till the ensuing morning, with the editorial critic of the first journal in Brussels—the soul of our little party under the auspices of my companion—himself a *Gantois,* at his pretty mansion at Everghem, near Ghent.

There is something in the very costume, as well as the manners, of the young and middle-aged in their *blouses,* their caskets or leather caps—their full jackets and trousers, that takes from the dignity of us children of larger growth, and, added to their vivacity, makes you think yourself in company with great boys just breaking up for the holidays. They rallied each other incessantly, passed their witticisms, even practical jests on the sleeping editor; smoked in spite of the conductor, and now and then enlivened their discourse by pokes under the ribs, with

similar evidences of exuberant mirth, rather at variance with our usual ideas of refinement.

The humorous professor, taking the slumbering critic for his subject, began to *improvise* in a most vehement style, in French heroic verse, ending in regular rhymes with the most singular turns and phrases, sudden apostrophes, accompanied with equally ludicrous and expressive gestures, that gave irresistible force to his rhapsody.

"If you want proofs of the superior industry and ingenuity of the 'braves Belges,' you have but to appeal to the exquisite flavor of their hams. What interesting classical associations spring up at the very name! How the old Romans relished our Menapian cookery! in fact, they always made their great roads and stations as near our pigsties as they could possibly contrive them. Prepared by a true Belgian cuisinier, our hams were a dish for an emperor. But it was the art divine of not curing them wrong, of submitting them to the exact processes, *secundum artem Belgicam*—which made Apicius such a *gourmand,* and the happy Martial exclaim, in a spirit of enthusiasm quite unusual with him:

> 'Cæretana mihi fies, vel missa licebit
> De Menapis: lauti de petasone vorent.'

"Now the Menapians, we know, according to the testimony of geographers, ancient and modern, spread themselves and their herds over a part of

Brabant, and another part of Flanders. Strabo informs us that we were in the habit of feeding immense numbers remarkable for their size as well as flavor; that they slept in the open air, and that when salted they were so plentiful as to supply, not only the old Menapian shepherds, Brabant and Flanders, but Rome itself, Italy, and the civilized world. The cause of this wonderful celebrity is traced by some writers to the method of killing, by others to that of feeding, by more than both to that of salting and smoking, by certain artificial processes known only to the pigs and the Menapians themselves.

"But if the lords of the creation were thus indebted to our old Menapians for the exquisite flavor of their feasts, the ladies were not under less obligations to us for their fine woollen stuffs, and their shawls and bonnets, carried to such perfection by the Belgians, and in particular by the Atribates: 'Non sine Atribatis sagis respublica tuta erat.' So says Trebellius Pollio in Gallienis. Then Vopiscus is likewise with us in this matter; 'Donati sunt ab Atribatis birri petiti.' The flocks of sheep in other parts, nearly at the same time, show the extent of our woollen manufactures, and we are told that at Tournay, under Valentinian III. there was an immense factory and grand depôt for the sale of the *wrought articles;* to a degree exceeding even those of my friend the editor, the head gear and gowns being in such constant request by the *demoiselles* of France, Germany, Italy, and where not? If the

first woollen manufacturers, then, it is evident that the Belgians were also the first dry-salters, which they could not have been without salt: this they found in the famous salt-pits belonging to the Menapians and the Morini, as may be seen in the ancient inscriptions contained in the work of Gruterus. Then with regard to their chemical processes in the preparation of new substances, liquid and solid, extracted, one may fairly say, out of nothing—alkalies, salts, soaps, it is evident that they outshone the Dutch, and the Frisons themselves; as you may read in the excellent memoir of M. du Rondeau, which forms part of the series of the *Memoires de l'Academie de Bruxelles.*' To come next to Pliny.

"From his authority we learn that an active commerce was likewise maintained between Belgium and Rome in the article of geese, Mr. Editor,—that whole flocks were imported for the imperial tables, solely for their giblets; and it is no improbable supposition that it was the loud cackling of one of these noble birds, during the extraction of his liver, which saved the capital of the world from the hands of its barbarian foes. The Roman also alludes to the happy art and address by which *MM. les conducteurs* succeeded in enticing these 'native dwellers of the Flemish marshes' to accompany them as far as the Roman ovens, and grace the tables of the emperors. He describes himself as an eye-witness of their numerous arrivals in the capital.

"The trade in hair was another fruitful source of

wealth in the latter days of imperial Rome; supplying the wives or courtesans of the great and fashionable with those fine blond Saxon perukes which had so great a charm for the dark-eyed dames who still affected to consider themselves the mistresses of the world. Of these false lovelocks, which succeeded to potions and charms, Martial and other poets often speak, and allude to their Germanic or rather Belgic origin :

'Cattica Teutonicos accendit spuma capillos,
Captivis poteris cultior esse comis.' (Mar. l. 14, Ep. 26.)

And in another we meet with the following still more expressive lines :

'Arctoa de gente comam tibi, Lesbia, misi
Ut scires quanto sit tua flava magis.' (Ib. l. 5, Ep. 69.)

" In one of his delightful elegies, Ovid has some elegant lines, much to the same purport:

'Nunc tibi captivos mittet Germania crines;
Culta triumphatæ munere gentis eris.'

" You need not be told that the extent to which the use of this artificial ornament was carried at Rome was a little mine of wealth to its importers. Again, the application of the 'grey goose quill,' to the purpose of inditing was made by Pepin de Landen, a native of Liége, who became afterwards *Maire du palais* in Austrasia. But it would be a

vain task to recount the triumphs of Flemish industry and skill, even in the least discoveries appertaining to our social wants and pleasures. Look under the title of 'Red Herrings' (M. Scourion, Hist. et Ency.) and you will form some idea of what we have done in regard to navigation, fishing, and pickling. And more especially consult Martin Scook's Dissertation upon the Herring (Groningen, 1649) and you will be surprised to find what an inexhaustible source of riches for the people of Bruges first, and other Flemings, was that red herring, till the trade was almost wholly absorbed by those greater picklers, the Dutch.

"The fine wools of England were comparatively useless till Flanders sent over its manufacturers and artisans in the reign of Edward III. who became indignant at seeing English merchants continually importing cloth from our country made out of your English wool. Without either a jest or a boast, likewise, it was Belgium which first taught France the art not only of weaving, but of producing silk; and our adopted historian, Guicciardini, speaks of Antwerp as the grand source from which the various processes sprung by which it was at length wrought to so high a degree of perfection. What beautiful variety and richness in the fabrication, nor less in the wonderful art of dyeing, with regard to both of which, premiums were offered and immunities granted to the discoverers of new methods. Louis XI. invited Flemgins to come and settle at Tours;

the duke of Brabant gave a dowry of £300,000 sterling with his daughter to Edward the Black Prince, an enormous sum for that period; and the ladies ought never to forget that the first glass coach that ever appeared at Paris was brought from Brussels by the great Condé, in 1660. Let them consider also the innumerable manufactories of fine stuffs, silks, satin, velvets, and damask, rich carpets, and embroideries of every kind, the beautiful porcelains, the fine chemical processes for dyeing, the various mills for oil, grain, and other substances still seen on the eminences, or round the ramparts of our towns, and they will form some idea of the splendor and affluence of our ancient Flanders.

"Of our modern, you see around you sufficient evidences of its flourishing state; its waste lands, including the Waesland, have been rendered so fertile as to be pronounced the Canaan of the Netherlands. And though there are a few discontented spirits, and the priesthood are aiming at re-establishing their ancient influence—a vain attempt—we shall in a little time overcome the difficulties of our position, and the disadvantageous circumstances by which we are surrounded. A line of steam-vessels, from Antwerp to America, and the purchase of colonies from old European states, if we find no other means of acquiring them, with the internal trade and outlets we already possess, with the rounding of our present dominions to their natural dimensions by the just award of time, will raise Bel-

gium to her due rank in the scale of European nations." Whether Utopian or not, I was unwilling to disturb the dreams of my happy companion, or I might have reminded him of the opinion of so many of the Gantois, not confined to the middle and industrious orders, that their celebrated city—commercial and manufacturing—had never been known so prosperous, since the days of Charles V. as under a Protestant and Orange dynasty. But I studiously avoided every allusion to politics; I had come to behold Flanders in her ancient and picturesque grandeur—from many causes now fast on the decline, to trace the footsteps of her giant race with the principalities and sovereignties of the middle ages; the site of her magnificent castles, and the loveliness and splendor of her river scenery.

There is something repulsive and dreary in the first sight of the decayed massive ramparts, dark narrow streets, high garden walls, and high-pointed edifices of old Ghent; before you become acquainted with the extent and beauty of the modern buildings and institutions which do so much honor to the taste and enterprise of the inhabitants. Streams, bridges, and canals—porticoes, theatres, and public offices—spires, towers, and churches—saints' shrines, hotels, and seminaries, everywhere meet the eye as you advance, giving us a high opinion of the business-like character and habits of the people; while the antique air of the Gothic houses, and the vast monuments and remains of art bear testimony to

Great Canal, with Antique Gothic House.

the affluence and grandeur of its former inhabitants. It is this mixed character which gives it, like Venice, an air of solitary majesty and loneliness; broken in the same way by a number of islands formed by the confluence of different rivers—the Scheldt and the Lys, the Liese and the Moere, which are connected by a succession of little bridges. It is this also which presents so many striking points of view, and picturesque objects and effects to the eye of the painter; the dark waters, the hanging balconies, the shadows of the massy walls, the rich architectural ornaments: and along the grand canal the curious antique buildings; the fallen arch, the boats moored under some vast ivy-mantled ruin, besides other parts of the ancient town, abound in localities which fix the mind as well as the eye by their interesting associations.

The canal of Neuzen was originally only an outlet for the waters of East Flanders and Holland, and to prevent the inundation of the neighbouring grounds. The state of Flanders, and the regency of Ghent, with the permission of the government, carried it to its present extent, so as to render it a truly noble sea-port. Napoleon had the merit of first projecting it, but only with military views; and it was completed within two years by means of incredible efforts and activity. The canal now occupies a space from the gate of Sar as far as that of Antwerp; it cost the town of Ghent one million of francs, it discharges itself into the western Escaut,

and continues increasing in dimensions until it reaches the breakwater at Neuzen, so that vessels, after their discharge at Ghent, can with ease re-ascend the Escaut and proceed till they arrive at Antwerp.

The opening of the grand canal took place on the 15th of December, 1828; and the ships of every nation have since that time entered by it the spacious port. The object for which it was constructed has thus in a great measure been attained, and some additional works, which are nearly completed, will considerably extend its usefulness as regards the interests both of agriculture and of commerce. A medal has been struck in commemoration of this great public work by M. Braemt, an artist of distinguished merit; and from the interest taken by other towns in its progress and success, there is little doubt that it must ultimately give a decided impulse to the prosperity of East Flanders. It has three excellent quays, with a number of magazines; in addition to the extensive buildings called the entrepôt, erected in 1779, at the expense of the province. It was the object of Maria Theresa, in her efforts to revive Flemish commerce, thus to establish a direct communication between Ghent and the sea by way of Ostend. The architecture is simple, and the entire edifice admirably constructed.

CHAPTER VI.

Ghent—Civil Government and Institutions—Churches—St. Bevon—Great Bell of the Tower—Chimes—Carillons—Beautiful Epitaph—Series of Chapels—Works of Art—The Brothers Van Eyck—The Sister—Rubens and his Master—Specimens of Sculpture—Collection of Paintings—Aspect of Town Halls—Grand Exhibitions—Chateau des Comtés—Fish Market.

THE ancient capital of East Flanders, Ghent, possesses a population of upwards 82,000 inhabitants; the province is divided into six districts, and contains not less than eleven towns, and 282 boroughs and villages. The governor's authority extends over all the branches of the provincial administration; he convokes the estates which send ten representatives to the second chamber; summons the tribunals which hold their assizes every three months; and superintends the revenues which are said considerably to exceed a million of francs. The maintenance of public order is confided to a director of police, who performs at the same time the duty of river bailiff, with the aid of five commissaries and eighteen agents of police. It is creditable to the

magistracy that a strong body of firemen have recently been established for the additional safeguard of a city so rich in magnificent edifices, in manufactures of every kind, and invaluable treasures of art.

One of the first objects, after our arrival, was to visit the town-hall, and the cathedral of St. Bevon, so famed for its possession of old Van Eycks and Rubens', though, to one who had never before visited this grand city, the whole may be said to resemble a single picture in the magnificence of its public edifices, and especially its churches. The effect is heightened by the deep tolling of the bells, generally followed by some of the old carillons playing the national airs, sufficient to direct you to these venerable spots without the assistance of a guide. We stopped on our way to view the ancient tower and belfry—the loftiest in all Flanders, and one of its grandest national monuments, now tinged with the splendid rays of the setting sun. The great bell was the tocsin of war and tumult through different ages; it was erected to commemorate the civil power and independence of the Gantois in the 12th century; and to them it was long what the Capitol was to the proud plebeians of Rome; till its sound became the signal for the rallying of a whole city;

"Quand notre cloche bât,
L'incendie va;
Quand elle sonne
Rebellion bonne."

But here is St. Bevon; we must visit Roland* again at the Town-hall!

This cathedral is one of the most splendid known in the Christian world; it was consecrated in 941 by Transmarus, bishop of Tournay. Formerly dedicated to St. John it only assumed the name of St. Bevon towards the middle of the 16th century, when Charles V. desirous of constructing a citadel upon the site of the ancient abbey of St. Bevon, transferred the collegiate chapter to the former church. It was raised to the dignity of a cathedral in 1559; and from the time of Jansenius, who first occupied the episcopal see in 1568, to that of Vandevelde, ancient dean of Lierre, consecrated in 1829, Ghent numbered no fewer than twenty bishops distinguished for their great learning, their piety, or their munificence. The tower is remarkable for its elegance; and it exceeds the height of 272 feet. From the platform in which its summit terminates you may behold, extending over an immense distance, on a grand level, the neighbouring towns even beyond fifteen leagues. The French, with their habitual love of national pilfering, ran away, it is said, with a precious carillon composed of an immense number of bells, forming a regular series of chimes and of half chimes, as exact as those that can be played upon a piano forte. M. Schippon, the grand chimer at Louvain, gained a considerable sum for having executed upon this chime a solo extremely difficult,

* Mynen naem is Roelant, als ick clippe dan is't brandt,
Als ick luyde, dan is't storm in Vlaenderland.

one which Mr. Kinner had composed for the violin. You perceive, over the principal entrance, a statue of G. Huge representing St. Bevon in his ducal habit, and holding a falcon upon his wrist. Formerly, two chapters of the order of the Fleece of Gold were held here; the first in 1445, at which Philip the Good presided, the second in 1559, graced by the presence of the tyrant, Philip II. of Spain. Its architecture is a fine specimen of the early Gothic; the nave of the centre in particular has a noble and majestic aspect; and for that portion of the front which was rebuilt in 1533 the Gantois are under obligation to the generosity of their once great ruler—who seemed to delight at once in adorning and chastising his birth-place — the emperor Charles V.

In the first chapel to the right, we saw a fine picture by G. de Crayer, a beheading of St. John. The heads are beautiful, and it is not less remarkable for its composition and whole execution. The second, consecrated to St. Colette, contains a picture by M. Paelinck, representing her in the act of accepting from the hands of the magistracy the donation of a large piece of ground for the establishment of a convent, which a nobleman, from respect for her virtues, presented to her as a free gift. It is only tolerably good, but the effect is pleasing; and we read the following epitaph upon this lady, who is said to have died in the flower of her age.

"*Dulcis amica Dei, Rosa vernalis,* STELLA DIURNA."

The third is dedicated to St. John, and contains an altarpiece by M. de Cauwer, the baptism of our Saviour by St. John, a painting deserving of notice. The fourth chapel to St. Lawrence, exhibits the admirable St. Sebastian by M. Van Hanselaere, a Gantois, who spent fifteen years in Italy, one of the first painters of the existing Flemish school. What design! what singular expression! what majesty! and what splendor of coloring! You see the heroic constancy of the martyr, the incarnation of that faith which enables him to triumph over every human suffering.

The fifth, consecrated to St. Sacrament, owing to an alteration made by M. Fallot de Beaumont—a name still fondly cherished by the Gantois, admits the light in so striking and agreeable a manner into the tabernacle, and the interior of the chapel, as to produce a very novel effect. The sixth chapel contains a fine specimen of Pourbus—taken away by the French, but restored in 1815; representing our Saviour surrounded by the doctors, and nearly all the figures are portraits of men employed under the government of Philip II. including that of the painter himself, a custom at that time much in vogue.

The seventh contains a production of G. de Crayer, the martyrdom of St. Barbara, a favorable specimen of that a tist's style.

In the eighth we saw a picture by Van der Meiren, a pupil of the brothers Van Eyck, as is

sufficiently apparent in the composition, the coloring, and the finish of the drapery. The subject is Jesus between the two thieves, and the work is not unworthy a pupil of the fathers of the Flemish art. The "Woman taken in Adultery," by Van den Heuvel, in the ninth chapel, is not particularly deserving of notice.

The eleventh, known by the appellation of *l'Agneau*, on account of the celebrated picture it contains by Hubert, and John Van Eyck, is of itself entitled to the admiration, not to say the assiduous study and veneration, of every true lover of the art. This picture is one of the most splendid productions of the old Flemish school; was painted at Ghent in the house of Hubert, and still preserves, notwithstanding the lapse of four centuries, its character and colors in all their original freshness. It bears in all its attributes, and particularly in the exquisite truth and beauty of the composition, and in the splendor of its draperies, marks of the most exquisite genius, and knowledge of the art the most comprehensive, studied, and refined. The heads are full of noble expression, and not a figure appears in the whole of this vast and masterly composition, which is not perfect in its design, and developed and elaborated to an exquisite finish, even as regards the minutest lights and colors, so as to impress upon the beholder a conviction of its living and absolute truth. This wonderful manifestation of two giant minds in the infancy of the art, is unique

in the history of European painting, and remarkable for its evidence of native artistical strength, borrowed from no school but that of nature, in itself originating a school, and stamping its first great character upon the old Flemish masters.

The painting represents "the spotless celestial Lamb," surrounded by angels of surpassing beauty, adored by all the saints,. and by the personages of the Old and New Testament, arranged in four extensive groups. To the right in the distance are seen martyred virgins and other saints; to the left, the bishops and heads of monastic orders, carrying branches of palms in their hands. Again, to the right on the first plain, are seen upon their knees the patriarchs and prophets of the ancient law; to the left, the apostles and confessors of the new law, in the centre of whom are to be recognised the portraits of the two brothers. Rising magnificently from the depths of the back-ground, you see the towers of the Holy Jerusalem enveloped in the glory of a luminous celestial horizon. These towers are said to be copied from those of Maestricht, a city not far distant from the place which gave birth to these two distinguished brothers. Above this finely-grouped painting are three others, not less admirable, of which the centre gives a full view of our Saviour, seated upon a throne. There is a simple and sublime majesty in the coun-

tenance and the whole expression seldom witnessed in modern productions; and the magnificence of the ornaments, and of the pontifical habits, the richness and elegance of the entire costume, are beautifully displayed. In his left hand, our Saviour holds a sceptre of crystal, exceedingly transparent, and sumptuously adorned; the top of it with precious stones, yet again surmounted with a splendid sapphire. The right hand is raised in the attitude of blessing the assembly of the faithful, who appear in the lower compartment, in the act of adoring the "Lamb of God."

Upon the left again the painting exhibits the Holy Virgin seated on a throne, and in the attitude of turning towards our Saviour; a sublime candor mingled with serenity, and the expression of the deepest piety, beam from her countenance. The head in particular, from its extreme beauty, the grace and perfection of its contour, is considered the miracle of the Flemish school, and it is deservedly placed in the first rank, with the Madonnas of Lionardo, and of the divine Raphael.

The figure of St. John, placed on the other side that of the Father Eternal, who regards him, forms, together with the Virgin, a very admirable contrast. The profuse hair and beard of the saint give him a dark and startling aspect, which is in excellent keeping, however, with the stern austerity visible in his strong and manly features. He

holds a book in his left hand, placed upon his knees, and painted with a truth which renders the illusion most complete.

These four paintings, which were formerly transferred to the Musée at Paris, were finally restored to Belgium in the eventful year 1815.

It would appear that the two brothers aimed at giving, in their great work, a complete history of the leading events in scripture, for they farther illustrated these four magnificent subjects, with wings or doors in eight compartments, painted with a vigor of hand and beauty not inferior to their first splendid essays. Two of these—"Adam and Eve"—are now placed among the archives of the church of St. Bevon; the third and fourth comprise a choir of angels, and a grand concert of vocal and instrumental music. The fifth and sixth represent the soldiers of Christ, and among the portraits we recognize those of Philip the Good, and of the two brothers themselves. Numbers seven and eight exhibit those of the hermits and holy pilgrims.

It is a humiliating fact, not very honorable to the guardians of treasures like these, that in the year 1816, six of the auxiliary pictures, the celebrity of which had been spread through Europe for centuries, were sold to M. Van Nieuwenhuyse, of Brussels, for the small sum of 6000 francs; in 1818 they were resold, with some other pictures, to an Englishman, Mr. Solly, for 100,000 francs; and

at length they came into the possession of the king of Prussia, for the sum of 400,900 francs, and are now the chief ornament of the royal cabinet at Berlin. The irreparable loss thus unfortunately sustained by Belgium, may be estimated by the rapidly increasing price, the value last set upon them, and the knowledge that they are considered invaluable, and now beyond the reach of a nation, out of the possession of which they ought never to have been ignorantly allowed to pass.

We next examined a large collection of works by painters of considerable eminence, but who do not rank with the few great masters of the art; till we came to a *chef d'œuvre* of Rubens—the Reception of St. Amand in the abbey of St. Bevon, after the miracle so seldom witnessed, of having divided his property among the poor. It is a picture remarkable for its grandeur of composition; the distribution of the figures, and the vigor and brilliancy of its coloring; characteristics also of the altar-piece, in which the painter is represented as St. Hubert, coming as a mendicant to the convent.

An altar-piece, the Resurrection of Lazarus, by Otto Venius, was pronounced by my Belgian friend to be worthy the master of a pupil who became the head of the Flemish school. It is in the style of Dominichino; the figures are finely drawn, and the whole composition is well studied and finished.

In the twentieth chapel are contained the baptismal fonts from which the emperor Charles V. re-

ceived his name in the year 1500. A few days after his birth, it was presented to him by his natal town, with the splendid gift of a boat constructed of solid silver, and subsequently he himself contributed the sum of 15,000 crowns towards the reconstruction of that portion of St. Bevon. In the centre of the grand nave to the right, is seen the finely-wrought pulpit, executed by Delvaux, an artist of Ghent. It is worked in white marble and solid oak. At the foot of the tree of life, which sustains the pulpit, Time appears seated under the figure of an aged man; his eyes are covered with a thick veil which he is in the act of raising to contemplate Truth, who presents herself in the form of a beautiful woman holding a book open, on which are traced the words, "Surge qui dormis, illuminabit te Christus." The four sides of this singular monument are decorated with bas-reliefs in white marble; but the mixture of wood has justly been criticised as not being in good taste. The grand choir, as well as the two collateral naves, of this magnificent edifice, are extremely elevated, which gives to the whole interior, an appearance of height and vastness. At the entrance both on the right and left, are seen two colossal statues, by Van Poucke;—"St. Peter," in the attitude of speaking, and "St. Paul" seen in the act of throwing a serpent into the flames, in the island of Malta. Like the early productions of this sculptor, they are more distinguished for the beauty of effect, than for

correctness of design; but the drapery is admirably graceful.

This pleasing artist was born at Dixmunde, in West Flanders, 1740, and died at Ghent, his adopted country, in 1809, after having passed many years at Paris and at Rome, and enriched the public edifices of his own country with many excellent specimens of his style. Around the high altar we beheld four noble monuments in marble; the most striking, that of the bishop of Triest, executed by the celebrated Duquesnoy. It has all the truth of life; the eye fixed upon the cross borne by the Saviour; while on the opposite side is seen the statue of the Virgin. The two cherubs are exquisitely done; and the whole composition presents one of the finest examples of the kind known in Flanders. Perhaps the only one which has been preferred to it by competent judges, is the "Maria Christina," the work of Canova, at Vienna.

The high altar at once arrests the eye of the stranger, by its elevated position and splendor of decorations, surrounded by three gates of bronze, of fine and elaborate workmanship. The columns, all of white marble, are of the Corinthian order; and, instead of the usual history-piece, the altar itself is surmounted by the statue of St. Bevon, in his ducal robes, borne upon the clouds, and with his eyes fixed upon the heavens. The large brass candlesticks, bearing the arms of England, were purchased from Oliver Cromwell. The figure of

the bishop is seen in the act of perusing the scriptures.

The crypt or subterranean church of St. Bevon, embraces the extent of the choir, and also of the adjacent chapels. Its enormous dimensions, and its drear undefined limits, from the depth of shadow reflected far upon the interior, recalled those noble lines of Pope, and made one thrill with sensations of ineffable awe, on first entering the gates of the hallowed dead,—

"In those dread solitudes and awful cells,"

which remind you of nothing less than the vast catacombs at Rome, where the precursors of that glorious light of Christian truth, ere yet it cheered and illumined a benighted world, first sought refuge to celebrate in peace the mysteries of their holy faith. This crypt is divided into fifteen chapels, in which are deposited a number of tombs and monuments belonging to some of the oldest and most distinguished families in Ghent. M. de Pradel, the celebrated *improvisateur* of France, when he passed through Ghent in 1830, gave expression to his feelings upon visiting these drear abodes, in some lines remarkable for their mingled piety and sensibility.

"Vers la crypte profonde un sentiment pieux
M'appelle et fait courber mon front silencieux,
Sombre asile des morts endormis sous la pierre
Tu remplis tous les cœurs d'un besoin de prière,

Ainsi près de la tombe ou tout est verité
Le mortel se rattache à la divinité."

Among the few paintings we saw worthy of remark, is one in the third chapel, in the manner of Otto Venius, correct in its design, and beautifully coloured. The subject is the Eunuch, baptized by St. Philip; and in a second the saint is seen in a chariot expounding to him the doctrines of Christianity; and again the saint appears borne by an angel into heaven.

In this vast mausoleum, a monument worthy of the Van Eycks, which, with its magnificent church, they rendered immortal by their works, is interred the body of Hubert, and that of his sister Margaret.* It is rarely that mass is here celebrated, but a scriptural school is opened every sabbath for the instruction of the young.

Upon leaving the church we observed to the right and left two antique oratories, still frequently visited with the devotion of pilgrims to some holy shrine, by all classes of the devout. The first of these, facing the *Rue du Gouvernement*, contains a group of figures, seen depositing the body of our Saviour in the tomb; the second, belonging to the chapter, represents the body of our Sa-

* *Marguerite Van Eyck*, the sister of Hubert and John, was possessed of considerable talent, and was so passionately devoted to the art which both her brothers had ennobled, that she is said to have taken a vow to St. Beghé, the patroness of the Béguines, never to marry.

ASIATIC

T. Allom

W. Radclyffe

Church of St Pierre, the St Geffroi & St Nicholas

by Moonlight, Ghent.

London, Published for the Proprietor by Longman & Co Paternoster Row October 1840

viour taken from the cross, and surrounded by the saints of the Old Testament. The disposition of these groups is good; in the style of the fifteenth century; but they have unfortunately been renovated with oils of different colors.

The exterior view of St. Bevon, its lofty and magnificent belfry, with the towers of St. Nicholas on the left, particularly when seen as they here appear—by moonlight, is remarkable for its picturesque and imposing effect. Its old Gothic architecture gives to the latter, perhaps the oldest religious edifice in Ghent, an antique and sombre air, which consorts well with those time-worn, yet graceful turrets, the resemblance of which to the oriental character, recals to mind the days of pilgrimage, when the Gantois wrested from their counts the peculiar privilege of fortifying their houses like a castle, as if destined in their absence to endure a siege. The animated groups assembled in front, convey a lively idea of the old business habits and peculiar costume of the people. The large tower was constructed in the year 1406; in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the entire edifice, having suffered severely in the religious wars, and been converted even into barracks, received great alterations and additions, which appear little in unison, however, with the modern appearance of the surrounding buildings. The interior, likewise, underwent numerous repairs, which have given a new character to its decorations; the

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grand portal was reconstructed in 1825, and the columns belong entirely to the modern Ionic order.

This church is not remarkable for the value of its pictorial embellishments. The best specimens are by M. Maes, Roose, Janssens, Le Plat, and Van Den Heuvel. An Annunciation by the latter, beautifully executed, adorns the altar of the virgin: the high altar displays great architectural beauty, chiefly from designs by the sculptor Van Beveren, of Antwerp; and there is a fine painting of the patron saint by Roose; the force of expression, and the splendor of the coloring, reminding the beholder of the pencil of Titian. The martyrdom of St. Andrew, by Borremans, seen as you enter the grand portal, has also a good effect. St. Anthony preaching during a storm, by M. Steynert, of Bruges, a picture presented by the Society of Fine Arts, (there is hardly a Belgian town without societies of the kind,) is possessed of much merit. Nearly facing this work, placed against the fourth pillar, we perceived the epitaph of Oliver Mingau, and of his wife, who are stated to have had thirty-one children, twenty-one boys, and ten girls. When the emperor Charles V. made his solemn entry as count of Flanders, into Ghent, it is said that he remarked the father in his uniform, at the head of his twenty-one sons, forming part of the procession. Surprised that a simple artisan should have been able

to educate so large a family, the high-minded monarch sent for him, and presented him with a pension as a mark of his approbation.

A magnificent monument of the church architecture of the middle ages, this interesting specimen of the early Gothic is seen to advantage from its site in the centre of the town; the most frequented quarter, known for its commercial activity, and surrounded by several public institutions.

A stranger may generally form a pretty correct estimate of the importance of a modern town, by the character and appearance of its civic hall;—the Hotel de Ville of the French and Belgians, and the Town Hall of Great Britain; for few other continental nations are sufficiently happy, industrious, and free to present the same criterion. This at once discovers the relative wealth and taste of the city through which you pass. That of Ghent consists of two buildings; the more ancient which fronts the street, called Haute-porte, is a magnificent specimen of the Gothic. This portion was commenced in 1481, but never completed; had it been so, it must have rivalled the most splendid monuments of the kind to be seen in Europe. Its distinguished architect, Jean Stassens, died in the year 1527, and was unfortunately replaced by Juste Pollet, whose first effort was to destroy the best part of his great predecessor's labors. "The present façade of the hall you now see," observed my companion, "was completed in a style and character

not at all consistent or in harmony with the genius of the master-mind which first planned the whole, though permitted only to execute a part.

"It is in this grand hall that the floral exhibition annually takes place, under the auspices of the Royal Society of Agriculture and Botany, an excellent institution, which has thus given an example of liberality in the pursuit of this fascinating science to the Low countries, and to Europe. You are conducted by a magnificent staircase to the splendid saloon of the throne so long celebrated in the history of this once great capital. It is now appropriated to public ceremonies, to grand meetings, and to those distributions of prizes which the administration of the town so liberally provides for the encouragement of science and the useful arts."

The Town hall contains the archives of the province, from a period farther back than the twelfth century. In 1820, a remarkable and interesting exhibition of all the various products of the country, took place within its walls. It embraces also some fine paintings, among others, one by Van Bree, representing the Prince of Orange interceding in 1577 in favor of the oppressed Catholics; another of Themis, with the attributes of justice, by Rombouts, remarkable for its correct composition and force of coloring. The various historical figures seen in groups as they appear in the next plate, will give an exact idea of the old costume, and the turbulent spirit of the people.

The belfry of this spacious edifice, the exterior of which we had already viewed, has long been an object of admiration to the stranger. In 1178 the Gantois obtained their civil privileges from Philip of Alsace: among others, that of possessing a bell to summon the population in case of public danger; to discover from the tower the approach of an enemy, while it served at the same time as a prison for malefactors. In 1183 they began the great work, and gave it that direction as it approached the summit, which resulted from poetical and religious ideas acquired in visiting the Holy Land. The enormous bell called Roland, was placed there in 1314; it is nearly 1300 lbs. weight, and was cast by Jean Van Roosbeke; but till 1530 it had only a single dial or plate, which faced the north. Three others were then placed; and the carillon was renewed in 1639 by Heming of Zutphen, the most able bell founder of his age. It possesses immense compass in its chimes, performs opera airs, vaudevilles, &c., every year renewed and varied during the holy week. The belfry is surmounted by a brazen dragon, which according to popular tradition was brought from one of the grand mosques at Constantinople by the Brugeois, who lost it in the civil wars of the fourteenth century, when their city fell before the power of the Arteveldes. Upon grand occasions, this dragon, the size of which is greater than two oxen, is filled with combustibles, which a man from the interior hurls into the sky, thus

producing more than the usual effect of fireworks, from its imposing height. In this belfry, also, the citizens were accustomed to conceal their charters and other privileges; and the lower part has more recently been appropriated to the purposes of a prison. Immediately above the entrance from the *Botterhuis* is seen a bas-relief representing Charity, under the figure of a female giving nourishment to an old man. Hence was derived the name of *Mammelokker*, given to this prison, at the foot of which is the rue St. Jean; a curious stone pump, erected in 1810, attracts attention, and near it an antique Gothic building, raised in 1325, to serve as a market hall.

The ancient castle of the counts of Flanders, situated in the fish market, is believed to have been erected as early as 863, by Baldwin Bras de Fer, the first of the name. In 1180, Philip, another count, repaired and greatly enlarged the wings; but it ceased to be appropriated as a palace from the middle of the fourteenth century; it then became a state prison, and criminals were executed between its front balustrades, and sometimes upon the bridge behind the castle. In 1418, Jean Sans-peur came to take possession of it; in 1460 the spiritual court of the bishop of Tournay; and the feudal court of the Vieux-Bourg occupied it in 1559. The council of Flanders also, previous to the suppression of the Jesuits, held its sittings there; and it is melancholy to reflect, that this venerable

edifice, so full of historical associations, was at length sold to the Sieur Brisemaille, who turned it into a manufactory.

The interior, if only for its extent, is well worthy of observation, though the best idea of it may be formed from the fine engraving left us by the learned Sanderus in his *Flandria Illustrata*. It is to be regretted that the grand entrance should now be almost hidden from view by the erection of some wretched workshops and walls. It must strike every stranger with astonishment, that a city like Ghent, proud of its magnificent remains of art, should so little consult its ancient and noble origin, as to throw an eye of disdain on the conservation of such testimonials of its former power; the cradle of Flemish liberty, and the birth-place of emperors. We feel nationally interested, also, as our famous John of Gaunt was born here.

The fish market presents to view a noble façade; the disposition of the interior is equally symmetrical, and adapted to useful purposes. A perpetual stream of air, carried through the main entrance, preserves it perfectly pure and free from noxious exhalations of every kind. It was erected in 1689, under the direction of Adrien Van der Linden; but the façade was constructed from the designs of the celebrated Quellyn. The portal, as well as two smaller ones, admit a free passage; the columns are decorated, and the chapters also are composed of sculptured fish. High above rises a circular attic,

ornamented on each side by a dolphin in white marble, by Van Poucke; the arms of the town are inscribed in the tympan, and above the entablature are seen the rivers Escaut and la Lys, supported on their arms, sculptured by Paoli, of Antwerp. The façade is surmounted by a colossal statue of Neptune by Helderemberg, a Gantois, whose works are held in repute.

The fish market abuts upon the *Pont de la Décollation*, or bridge of execution, in regard to which the following singular tradition is still preserved. A group in bronze indeed was to be seen here up to the time of the revolution in 1794, which represented a son in the act of beheading his own father. In 1371, says the old Chronicle, a Gantois having been condemned to lose his head, his own son secretly officiated as his executioner. In the act of decapitation, the sword, instead of killing the man, flew into a thousand pieces; and two figures, large as life, were placed on the spot to commemorate the reputed miracle. In the town hall is also an old painting representing exactly the same subject; and there are two inscriptions, one on the breast of the father, and another on that of the son, commemorative of the event. It is to be regretted, that the monument no longer remains to attest the value of the tradition, and to inspire popular horror of the crime; while it presented to us the old national costume.

CHAPTER VII.

Historical Associations and Traditions— The Arteveldes—Biographical Traits—Odd Mode of Expiating Crime—Daring Spirit of the Gantois—The Brugeois—Era of Charles V.—His praise of the Belgians —Abdication—Monarchs of Mind—Rubens—Vandyke—And their Predecessors—Paintings and Drawings—Useful Institutions—Schools —Lectures, &c.

Rich in historical associations, Ghent traces back its existence beyond the seventh century, till, like other cities, it is lost in legend and tradition. That king Dagobert, however, sent St. Amand* to preach the Gospel,—Charlemagne chose it for his residence in Flanders,—Baldwin, the first count, fortified the city, so that it continued to increase in territory, wealth, and power, to the middle of the sixteenth century—are facts, generally known to the readers of modern history. Before the tenth the Gantois were already famed throughout Europe for the excellence of their looms and the beauty of their dyes, as well as for their rural industry and economy.

* The first Christian church founded in Ghent, owing to the preaching of St. Amand, was in 636.

With their civil privileges, their political power continued to extend; in 1297 they repulsed from before their gates an army of 24,000 men commanded by Edward I. the greatest prince and general of his age. At the close of the 14th century they mustered an army of 80,000 men equipped for the field within their walls; and maintained their independence with consummate spirit till the overwhelming power of Burgundy, of Spain, and Austria, with barbarian hosts, trampled Flemish freedom and prosperity in the dust.

It was in the zenith of its fame and its opulence that Petrarch visited Flanders, and on the banks of the Lys and the Escant is said to have expressed his astonishment at the grandeur of the cities which he had seen, and to have composed in the vicinity some of those beautiful canzoni which have rendered his name immortal. He declared, that, among all the cities through which he had passed after leaving Italy, he had met with none to rival Ghent in prosperity and magnificence.

In the course of time, the Gantois succeeded in extending the precincts of their city, and rendering it at once so industrious and so populous that it surpassed, both in numbers and extent, the capital of France itself. It was this which gave rise to the *bon mot* uttered by Charles V. in derision of the power of Francis I.: "Je mettrais Paris dans mon gand (gant)"—I could put all Paris into my glove.

In 1300 Philip le Bel having succeeded in occu-

pying the city, appointed Jacques de Chatillon, a man of tyrannical disposition, as governor, while its native prince, Gui de Dampierre, remained a prisoner in France. The people of Ghent soon rose against their oppressors; Pierre de Koning, a weaver of Bruges, conceived the project of delivering Flanders from the foreign yoke. At the head of the Klauwaerts (the Lion-claws) a name adopted by the patriots, he sounded the great bell, raised the people, and drove the French, the *Lelialen*, or friends of the lily, from the town. The son of the imprisoned count was appointed to command the army assembled under the walls of Courtray; while that of the enemy took up a position upon the Pottelberg, to the number of 47,000 men, more than twice that of the Gantois, and composed of the flower of the French nobility. The city was moreover suffering from famine; yet Jean Borluut, at the head of the artisans and weavers of Ghent, gained a decided victory near the abbey of Groeninghe; and more than 700 golden spurs and other trophies were exhibited in the church, with immense booty.

Soon the family of the Arteveldes rose into notice and reputation by their gallant deeds. The union of Brabant and Flanders was the work of one of the most daring and accomplished of this noble and gifted race, who, in their sphere, may be said to have played the same perilous game as the Medici and other citizen princes of Italy, who had talents and wealth to make themselves respected, and even

feared, by contemporary princes and sovereigns. This great event was followed by a treaty between the Flemings and the English, in virtue of which they declared war against France. Edward III. in his absence confided the conduct of the war to Van Artevelde, in conjunction with Lord Salisbury; nor was it long before the Fleming justified the high opinion entertained of him, by bringing into the league nearly all the great towns of Brabant and Flanders. Queen Philippa continued to reside in Ghent, where soon afterwards she gave birth, in the *Chateau des Comptes*, to the celebrated John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster. On his return, Edward, after the naval battle of l'Ecluse repaired to Bruges, accepted the freedom of the Trades; held a council at Ghent, and attended by Van Artevelde proceeded in 1340 to Vilvorde, and took measures to besiege Tournay, supported by the citizen regent of Flanders, at the head of 40,000 men. Jacques Van Artevelde was in fact a truly great man, and by his talents brought the war to a close honorable to the Flemings. A still greater proof of his moderation and grandeur of mind was his submission to the laws of his country, under circumstances the most trying. He had been deeply insulted by one of the magistrates; and in the heat of the moment followed and invested his adversary's house at the head of his troops. This called forth a strong reclamation; every citizen's house was his castle; the regent at

once acknowledged the appeal, disbanded his troops, and, not content with that, constituted himself a prisoner in the hotel de Villain, while his adversary occupied the Graevenstein. The cause was brought before the regular tribunal of justice; Van Artevelde was reinstated in all his dignities; and his adversary, with his partisans, were banished by decree of the three great towns for a limited period.

This enlightened regent, with the consent of the states, in 1343, divided Flanders into three military districts, and was himself appointed to the command of Ghent, including the Pays de Waes, Termonde, Alost, Oudenarde, and Courtray. After a life spent in the service of his country, in vain endeavours to reconcile contending factions, and in bringing over the Flemish cities to elect the king of England for their suzerain, Jacques Van Artevelde was assassinated by his enemies with ten of his companions, to the extreme grief of the great towns, and of his ally, king Edward III. So eager were the Flemish cities to disclaim any kind of participation in so revolting a crime, that Bruges, Ypres, Cassel, Courtray, and Oudenarde, sent deputies to attest their horror at the unnatural act against the father and defender of their cities; and the Gantois, no less unanimous, immediately renewed their alliance with England.

It is probable that the body of the regent was interred in the church of La Byloque; for it was there one of the assassins, De Mey, made a singular

provision for the burning of a lamp which was to be kept like a vestal flame before an image of the Virgin, sacred to the memory of Jacques Van Artevelde; a curious form of atonement, which shows that the assassin did not imagine that he had freed the world from a tyrant, or a monster.

During seven years he continued to raise the power and prosperity of Ghent to a height unknown before. Equally celebrated as an orator, a statesman, and a general, with the noble spirit of a free citizen, and the dignified air of a sovereign, it is no wonder he became the idol of merchants and men of business, both in his own and in other countries; for he was deeply versed in the policy which raises individuals, like states, to eminence; and which maintains them in their power when so raised, by adhering to the same principles, and to the caution and moderation through which advantages are first gained, and the road to success and greatness laid open. He was also distinguished for his piety and learning; and even the clergy advanced immense sums to support his government. Unhappily, in all times, wealth and abundance are the sure handmaids of luxury, depravation, and destruction; in Ghent, at that perilous epoch, the simplest citizen and his family were seen robed in purple and silks; and the people, like their governors, forgetting the example of their great and virtuous men, abandoned themselves to that dissipation of mind and body which brings disorders of every other kind. The public

baths, in particular, became the scene of the most unbridled licentiousness; and in less than a single year there are said to have been committed no fewer than 1400 murders within the city of Ghent, and its dependencies.

The marriage of Margaret, daughter of the count of Flanders, with Philip the Hardy, duke of Burgundy, first brought Flanders under the sway of that powerful house. The imposition of taxes, and the grant of certain privileges to the Brugeois, gave rise to a series of intestine wars as injurious to the interest of the Flemings, as favorable to the designs of their enemies.

Under the counts of Flanders, the dukes of Burgundy, and the kings of France, the Flemings ceased not to display the same love of freedom, and even licentiousness, the same resistance to arbitrary authority, and particularly to imposts of every kind as being at variance with their principles of trade, and in these civic insurrections the Gantois generally led the way. If overpowered for the moment they again rose with fresh vigor; oppressed by the father, they extorted from the daughter* the grand charter of rights, binding upon her and her successors. After her death they refused to acknow-

* Mary of Burgundy, daughter of Charles the Bold, so beloved by the Flemings for her high and chivalrous spirit, as well as for her virtues, her amiable qualities, and accomplishments. She died at the early age of twenty-five, in consequence of a fall from her horse, which she concealed from her consort.

ledge Maximilian, seized the person of his son Philip, and appointed tutors, who should maintain the legitimate government in his name. The Brugeois, supporting them in this daring policy, secured Maximilian himself, then king of the Romans, and made him take a solemn oath to renounce the tutorship, to disband all the foreign troops, and to give hostages before they set him at liberty.

The emperor Frederick, his father, prepared to lay siege to Ghent at the head of 40,000 Germans, but, after ravaging the country, he was compelled to retire with loss. Ultimately, however, Flanders was subjected to the payment of 525,000 florins towards the expenses of the war.

A new epoch, the birth of Charles V. at Ghent, in the palace called *La Cour des Princes,* the 26th of February, 1500, prepared fresh disasters, and a more enduring yoke for the country. He was baptized on the fifth of March, in the church of St. Jean, now St. Bevon; and the spot where he was born—formerly decorated with splendid bas-reliefs, representing the actions of the greatest prince since the days of Charlemagne, has been condemned to the inglorious use of a cotton factory. The event was celebrated with the utmost pomp and rejoicings; and some of the exhibitions on this occasion, as described by contemporary writers, marked at once the magnificence, and the ingenuity and skill, of the old Gantois. Among other rare devices, we are told that a sort of aerial gallery was constructed which extended from the summit of the tower of St.

Nicholas to that of the great belfry—secured by immense ropes of the strongest texture; and that during three days the people amused themselves with aerial walks from one edifice to the other, a distance of 200 feet, the effect of which, when splendidly illuminated at night, produced a novel spectacle, and threw its magic radiance over the general carnival held below.

The history of Flanders at that eventful period is comprehended in the reign of Charles V. the ruler of Germany, of the Low countries, of Spain, Sicily, America, and the arbitrator of Europe and Africa. Still the Gantois often refused to pay the heavy subsidies levied during his wars, and actually rose in arms,—a degree of temerity for which they severely suffered. In the annexed view they are represented as preparing for another outbreak. Charles occupied their city as a sovereign holding the sceptre in one hand, and the sword in the other; ordered the gates to be closed, summoned his council, and the chevaliers of the Golden Fleece. He first appealed to the duke of Alba; who advised him to punish the contumacy of his subjects by levelling the entire city with the ground. The emperor's reply, according to the Spanish historian,* was to ascend with Alba the grand tower of the belfry, from which he directed his attention to the extent and limits of the city; and when they had descended, the emperor, being fond of a pun, demanded of his general how many skins (peaux, or

* Strada.

towns) in Spain he thought it would take to make one Flemish glove (gant—gand) of that size? The duke made no reply, being fully sensible that the emperor was shocked with the gross inhumanity of his council; which he farther showed by restricting his vengeance to a pecuniary fine, the privation of their privileges, and particularly of their great bell *Roland*, the most noisy and the most influential of all the agitators. In the same arbitrary manner he deprived other great towns of their civil rights, and with their freedom, their commerce and prosperity fell insensibly into decay. It was only when repulsed from before the walls of Metz, and lacking money to carry on his campaign, that Charles became sensible of the value of free commercial towns; and then it was, that, in splenetic mood, he laid the blame upon fortune, whom he declared to be "a very woman who always preferred young people to old men." Already disgusted with the cares of state, he abdicated his wide-extended sovereignties, in his favorite palace at Brussels, in 1555, and, retiring to Spain, died a monk and a maniac—as is well known—in the monastery of St. Juste. Notwithstanding his occasional rigor, Charles V. always respected the character of the Flemings, and was heard to declare that there was no people who could be more easily governed by a wise and intelligent prince, and none, on the other hand, who could be brought to bend with more difficulty to a capricious despotism, or showed more penetration in estimating the acts of a government.

The religious and political wars by which the Low countries were subsequently desolated, have been so often described in modern history, during the successive periods of Philip II., Margaret of Austria, Albert and Isabella, Maria Theresa, and Joseph II., that it will be pleasanter to revert to topics of somewhat more novel interest. Ghent appears to have been visited by the illustrious men of almost every age, from Charlemagne to that of Charles V. and from the latter to the days of Napoleon and Wellington. It often afforded an asylum for unfortunate princes before the flight of Louis XVIII. who occupied the hotel of M. Le Compte d'Hane de Strenhuyse, rue des Champs; and the great warrior who twice restored him to his throne, took up his residence in one exactly opposite that of the French monarch, who resided there during three months; and left it to give his royal brother the benefit of another run from Paris. It was a Belgian battalion (the 7th) formed in Ghent, that in the great battle which ensued, rescued the prince of Orange, when on the point of being killed or taken prisoner, from the hands of the enemy. "Glory to the 7th," he cried, as he threw among them his decorations; "you all deserve them."

"But a truce to your lucubrations concerning those grand levellers of their kind—kings and soldiers," I observed.

"Who can take care of themselves," added my friend; "and let us do the same, and enjoy ourselves

in this splendid gallery; for here we may satisfy our reason while we feast the imagination and the soul; far more delightful than doing homage to the great, or paying compliments to history, which Walpole declared to be 'the thing which is not;' in other words, a series of well-invented fictions; just 'to talk about it; Goddess, and about it.' But they are the true monarchs who sway our minds ages after they have ceased to live; and here before you,—thanks to M. Schamp—lies *real* history; for the great painters of their day may ennoble their originals, but they never distort. Here you behold the 'foremost men of all their age,' who, in their several spheres, made the greatest noise in the world,—kings and demagogues, lords and patriots; and, better than all, the forms of the loveliest women, and the divine heads of our intellectual artists. There are two Vandykes, such as you can only see here, and in the Palais d' Orange at Brussels. Do they not seem to live and breathe; as if every moment they were about to start from the walls, and address you? To produce that vivid impression of reality is the great triumph of the art. There is the great statesman and ambassador P. Gonzalvo de Cordova; the other, Alessandro Scaglia, Spain's representative in the congress of Munster. What dignity!—what mind!—what calm, deep thought, concentrated energy, and silent passion! It is, like the genius of the artist, under perfect self-control; and, if they had beheld it in time, a good

study to have disciplined the exuberant imagination of a Napoleon or a Byron; of all those who allow imagination and passion to dictate, instead of obeying the behests and throwing all their energy into the scale of reason. The more Vandyke is studied, the greater does he appear; as if the Raphael of the north had not yet attained half his just meed of fame; while his master, perhaps, rose to higher honors than he could well have sustained without the assistance and exciting genius of his great scholar. It was with our early masters as with Lionardo and Michael; our Van Eycks and our Memlings seemed to start at once into perfection, and stamp an inimitable character upon their works which was only feebly reflected on that of their school. Vandyke, perhaps, is the single exception; for, if you compare his heads, and the classic chasteness of his groups with those of Rubens, you will find in them a closer resemblance to the early models, a severe and studied beauty mingled with his luxuriant powers—that which is truly called *ideality,* from which Murillo was proud to copy, but which the more full and mechanical compositions of Rubens do not possess. And here we behold excellence of a different kind; in their conversation and lesson-pieces Flemish artists still exercise a power over the mind—a something more interesting than any appeal to the senses. How graphic and real is that *Leçon de Musique;* each figure—the group—the expression, is the triumph of art, because, as Lessing so well

explains it, there is no appearance of art. Yet it is only a small *jeu d'esprit* of Gabriel Metz, painted in 1652.

"And here again you can draw an interesting parallel by marking a wide distinction, and write a sonnet to both if you please. The head of an old woman by Denner—an excellent Dutch portrait in its way; and a beautiful girl, by Rubens—his own daughter; for you see it bears a remarkable resemblance to his first wife, Isabella Brand. For this artist, it has certainly in it more of the ideal than we generally see; how natural, how strong the relief,—and how chaste the outline; do you think he painted it from a sketch made by his great pupil? I do. Is it possible to conceive two portraits, and two styles more strongly opposed, than we have them before us, in the Flemish and the Dutch? You see the fair child walking in her father's garden; and that portico, almost the only object now to be seen of the splendid house and grounds belonging to the great painter; and what a singular contrast to the wrinkles, the grey hair, the resigned and lowly expression of those aged features that seem to regard her. How singularly contrasted, too, with the hoydenish air, the bold eye, and laughing looks of that young heiress, so trimly bedecked in rich costume and jewellery; for it is the same young lady whom you see in the garden, and to whom the archduke Albert became godfather. Rubens, we must remember, always was

a lord, and a prince, the 'Seigneur de Steens,' and of princely tastes, which he knew how to gratify; for he was also an ambassador, and a Secretary of State; and elevated to that dignity by the fascinating archduchess. He went also upon a mission from Philip IV. of Spain, to King Charles I. of England; was the companion of courtiers, and the favorite friend, as well as artist, of Mary de' Medici. He attained to fortune as well as celebrity, and, like the great critic Johnson, having surmounted every obstacle that opposed him, he maintained his independence with jealous vigilance, spurning the offers of service which came when he no longer required them. He acted like a true prince with the prince who sent him a present of fifty pistoles, by sending back double the number, like the Norman knights, who, finding no seats at a banquet, to which they had been invited, sat on their rich cloaks, and left them as a proof they were not in want of a dinner. And once when an English fortune-hunter came to tempt him with the promise of the philosopher's stone,—'You are too late,' he said,—'I have found it in my palette and brush:' and if we can thus speak of the noble self-respect of the master, the life of his greater pupil would in itself form a splendid romance. In presence of the works of such men, it is almost a task to notice less distinguished efforts; the skilful interiors of Peter Nées; the excellent copies of Lionardo, by Mabuse, the Hungarian, who, during his residence as court

painter in England, produced an immense number, which continue to be sold as originals to this day. A few of his best specimens are to be seen at Amsterdam; he was also a mimic and a droll; therefore a special favorite, it is said, of that generous patron of merit, compared with other princes,—the child of Ghent,—the emperor Charles V."

We next examined some exquisitely colored drawings of Rubens; for this tasteful collection is rich also in the designs and studies of the best Flemish masters. It is select, though presenting few specimens of each; but when nearly all are such as the sketch of the "Miracle of St. Benoit," by Rubens, it is the more delightful to occupy the mind with the creations,—to feed the fancy, and accustom the taste only to the very cream and essence of this divine art. For what, but these and the grand religious edifices which contain them, has Belgium, in reality to boast for the thoughtful and high-minded stranger; or what are religious wars or political struggles of ages, with the brute power of this leviathan world, when put into competition with higher and loftier claims—with the intellectual supremacy, the immortal mind and fame of the lords of that beloved lyre (the supreme spiritual good), which so entirely absorbed the Michael Angelos and the Miltons of every age, and compelled them, in spite of every allurement,

"To scorn delights and live laborious days."

"And who is the enthusiast now?" exclaimed the young Belgian, "was there ever a specimen of more German and transcendental doctrine; at variance with all modern notions of turning every thing to jest and farce, celebrating the heroes of workhouses, the counting-house, or the turf, or the goal, and giving a zest to the commission of crime itself.

"But look at this drawing—it was done by Rubens in the Abbey of Affleham, near Alost, when he had just painted the fine picture of St. Roche, for the cathedral of that place. It is said that he promised to return and paint a second subject of it for the refectory of the monks; and the place for it was actually kept vacant from that time up to the French revolution, when the monasteries and all their appurtenances were destroyed.

"Ghent was celebrated for her schools of every kind, before the period of Charles V. to the days of Leopold. These have not been allowed to fall into disrepute. The government has made efforts to support their former usefulness and reputation; and introduced the most approved system of instruction. They may now be called the model school of Belgium; and it is impossible to behold the vast and varied establishments of science, literature, and the fine arts, which arrest the eye at every step, without forming some idea of what she was in the day when she repulsed princes and emperors from before her gates. As admirable as

. they are useful, we contemplated her extensive labors and productions,* ancient and modern, with surprise, while the surviving examples of ecclesias-

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* We had only time to cast a glance at the two churches and interesting communities attached to them of the Béguines; of which the beneficent objects and practical utility, has, in the midst of all other changes, preserved the same character, and merited the forbearance and the respect of successive princes, and even of Joseph II., who suppressed so many religious establishments. Founded as early as the twelfth century, and conducted upon a plan differing from all other Catholic congregations, they retain all the advantages of the monkish foundations as places of seclusion, and active charity, without their superstitious penances and austerity. They extort no vows; the members are sisters, without being nuns or recluses; they admit females of every rank, and encourage every kind of manual industry. The king of Holland, who regarded them as combining the usefulness of hospitals, schools, and houses of industry, instead of innovating, as in other cases, gave them a legal title and existence in 1827.

The sister of Pepin de Landen, since called St. Beggé, who died in 689, is said to have been the first who formed this kind of religious congregation; and the same order was afterwards established by Lebégue, a priest of Liege, who died in the year 1170. Its great benefactress, the Countess Jeanne, of Constantinople, founded this ancient establishment in 1234, and the Béguines obtained leave to raise a chapel, on condition of paying an annual sum to the Abbey of St. Bevon. The grand Béguinage now forms in itself a little town, remarkable for its elegance and simplicity; it comprehends about six hundred members, who retain the ancient black costume, with a white head-dress. Ladies of the first respectability have retired to spend their days in these charitable retreats, nor do they confine the good they do, and their religious visits, to the precincts of their walls, though separated from the other quarters of the city. The church is in the centre of the square, which is surrounded with houses, as well as several lanes,—all in the same enclosure. Over each door there appears written some religious sentence, or saint's name, by which the dwelling was known. The best time to visit the community is pending the church service, during the performance of which, the effect of the

tical and domestic architecture, filled the mind with mingled awe and regret. We recalled the words of one of her enthusiastic modern poets and eulogists—M. de Prudel:

> " Cité de Charles Quint, cité des nobles cœurs ;
> Ah ! que doit être doux de t'avoir pour patrie !
> Tu fais fleurir les arts, les talents l'industrie,
> Eh ton front est couvert de lauriers et des fleurs."

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sombre light resting upon the dark figures seen kneeling before the high altar, which represents a descent from the cross, of some merit, inspires a feeling of solemnity and repose, seldom experienced elsewhere. The community of the Petit Béguinage consists of 400 persons, and was instituted under the title of *Notre Dame au Pre*, by the same countess Jeanne, and her sister Marguerite, in 1234. It is conducted upon a similar plan; but the edifices have a more light and agreeable air; and the façade of the church, in particular, is very elegant. The contrast on re-entering the public walks, visiting the cassino, the grand university, and the new theatre, after leaving these religious precincts, was very remarkable.

CHAPTER VIII.

Ghent to Malines or Mechlin—Former State—Its high Privileges and Importance—Men of Science—Other celebrated Characters—Literature and the Arts—The old Minstrels—Merchant Princes and Rulers—Specimens of Early Poetry—Marguerite of Austria—Traits and Traditions—Work of M. Santander—Songs of Roland—The Cathedral—Description—Paintings.

WITHIN some brief hours after leaving Ghent, we saw the spires of Malines, or Mechlin, now more celebrated as the central point of Belgian railways, than as the ancient seigniory which formed one of the seventeen united provinces. The French revolution, the wars of Europe, and the fall of Napoleon, which reversed the old state of things, produced changes even in this little town, which once rivalled in its manufacturing fame the great cities of Flanders. Having the advantage of the river Dyle, in direct communication with the Rupel and the Escant, with Brussels, Antwerp, Louvaine, Termonde, and other important places adjoining, it still preserves its pacific and industrial character,

in a situation as favorable and pleasant as it is considered salubrious. Even its name, derived from *Maris linea,* or the sea line, would import as much; while its ancient appellations of the "beautiful," "the bold," and the "prudent," seem to convey an idea of its former success and prosperity. It was the seat of a grand council, and in 1490, was raised by the emperor Frederick into a *comté* for the eminent services rendered to its sovereigns, in particular during the captivity of Prince Maximilian, also king of the Romans during his incarceration, in the hands of the Brugeois; who made him undergo the humiliation of a public retractation, and taking an oath to observe the terms imposed by them.

Furnished with pleasant walks, extending round the town,—wide airy streets and squares, and the vicinity agreeably diversified with wood and water, —you may spend hours in admiring only the exterior embellishments and antique edifices of the once lordly and still busy Mechlin. We counted eight principal gates or entrances, opening on the roads to Brussels, Antwerp, Liege, Diest, and Louvain; the river Dyle, and the old road to Brussels, at present to the modern station of the rail-roads. Its population, however, does not exceed 25,000, though it has an archiepiscopal see, and seminary established in 1596; is a chief place of assize, with a local administration, composed of a burgomaster, three sheriffs, and fourteen members

of the council of regency. This grand council and high court of justice, was established in 1473, by Charles le Hardi, duke of Burgundy; consisted of thirty-five members, comprehending the sovereign, the chancellor, one chief, and two assistant secretaries, four chevaliers, six masters of requests, belonging to the *cour du Prince,* and twenty councillors, of whom eight were priests. From its importance it often became the arbiter of royal differences; superintended the affairs of the order of the golden fleece, of the council of state, of the finances, the chambers of the courts of Flanders, and members of the *cour du Prince.* The judgments of the provincial councils of Flanders and of Luxembourg were also submitted to it as a court of appeal, and its own verdicts were subject only to the highest sovereign tribunal.

At Malines was also instituted one of the richest orders of chivalry—the commandery of Pitzenbourg, instituted in the year 1198.

The "Maison des Invalides," established in the buildings of the suppressed convent of the Jesuits, and in which Charles V. used to reside, the "Caserne des Soldats," the arsenals, manufactories of different kinds of arms, and schools of artillery with large experimental grounds, and many other public institutions, formerly gave a very different aspect and character to the little town. It still retains two collegiate schools,—that *de la ville,* and the archiepiscopal college, which last numbers

about 300 pupils. An academy likewise affords gratuitous instruction to nearly four hundred more in design, architecture, sculpture, and perspective; add to which, a society for the encouragement of the fine arts; and a large exhibition room for the works of living artists, continue to show what the more prosperous days of Malines must have been. The two Casernes, a guard house, and a Manége, erected at the expense of the town, for the use of the garrison, part antique and part modern, present a singular variety of style. It was in the fourteenth century that Malines possessed her grand cloth manufactories, the operatives in which were so numerous, that they sometimes became masters of the town, and imposed their own laws, or rather wages. In the fabrication of fine lace, its reputation was equal to that of Brussels; nor was it inferior in a variety of other branches, which long continued to support its prosperity. In fact, few towns previous to the revolution of France could boast either more splendid or more remunerating establishments.

In its historical associations, its men of literature, painters, sculptors, and engravers, as well as in men of science; and many distinguished and highly accomplished women, among whom the family of Van Thielen had three gifted with an excellent genius for painting, Malines still maintained its rank with other Belgian cities. The learned Nicholas Voerdanus, blind from his third

year, attained to the degree of Doctor of Laws, in the two universities of Cologne and Louvain. The two Bacx, Bernaerts, Cuypers, De Ridder, Domigns, and numerous others, attained well deserved celebrity, and reflected lustre on their native town. Guicciardini speaks in terms of admiration respecting the literary character of the Belgians, from the earliest times, and adduces the state of the coinage, and the superior freedom of the inhabitants with their productions of every kind, as a proof of their high state of learning and civilization. The monastery of St. Martin, and the abbey of St. Bertin, produced scholars of eminence in the tenth and eleventh centuries; and when the great Alfred wished to establish collegiate institutions in England, he sent for Grumbalde, to whom Oxford was indebted, as early as 886, for the foundation of its far-famed university. The work, entitled "*Livre des Assises et des bons Usages du royaume de Jerusalem,*" served as a model for Godfrey of Boulogne; and is still the admiration of the best writers on national jurisprudence. No people was consequently possessed of better laws; and princely legislators sent to form their codes upon the same basis, when Henri Goethals, in advance of the spirit of his age, excited so much gratitude for his labors, that he was presented by the Sorbonne with the title of *doctor par excellence*,—the most learned jurisconsult of his times. He was followed by a throng of great names, prelates, doctors, grand

dignitaries,—all men of first-rate merit. The succession of genius in the family of the Goethals alone, in the opinion of their biographers, was sufficient to illustrate the literary character of Belgium, by the number and merit of their various and useful works. The names of Sigebert de Gembloux, Alberic de Trois Fontaines, Jean d'Outre Meuse, Philip Mouske, Georges Chastelain, Jehan le Maire, Philip de Commines,—so called from the name of that little town upon the Lys; with Jansenius, the brothers De la Hulie, Audifroy, De Condé, De Bethunes, Le Frouc, Le Maire, and others almost equally distinguished by their varied talents, acquired a lustre of reputation which extended its influence and served as an example to surrounding states.

The French are indebted for much of their national history to the same source, as witness the "Chronique sur les gestes des Normands en France," inserted in the collections of Duchesne and Don Bouquet. The fable of the chevaliers of the swan, which gave rise to so many legends and poems, is assuredly of Belgic origin, for it is full of traditions and geographical details relating to the country. M. Hoffman, in his "Horæ Belgicæ," is decidedly of this opinion, as well as the ingenious M. de Reiffenberg, in his valuable and interesting introduction. It is curious also to know that we owe to a Belgian physician, Renaudot, the first idea of a public journal, which he introduced

and called by the name of *Gazette*. In 1550, the printer Verhoeven also published at Antwerp a Flemish Gazette, entitled the *Courante, Courier*, with the motto,—"Den tydt zal léeren;" and which contained political articles, commercial and literary announcements, and arrivals in port. The first inquiry into the art of verifying dates, and the first collection of voyages to the Eastern and Western Indies, were respectively supplied by Maur d'Antini, and Theodore de Bry. One of the most extensive publications ever carried through, the celebrated historical work called *Acta Sanctorum*, of the Bollandists, was the work of the Jesuits of the Low countries—exceeding even the grand labors of the Benedictins. Where are the historians who have not made use of the excellent chronicle,* by Antoine de Roovere, and André Die Sinet, natives of Bruges, in the fifteenth century; and of the noble work of Sanderus?† and where shall we look for a correct picture of the manners, customs, and history, of Flanders, except in the admirable annals of Meyer, of which the details are as interesting as they are correct? If we consult, likewise, the elaborate work of M. Willems, member of the Royal Academy of Brussels, upon Belgian literature, we meet with a number of new and interesting facts, only recently brought to light,

* Die Excellente Cronyke van Vlaenderen.

† Flandria Illustrata.

bearing upon the early rise, the successful development and progress of its literature, as well as its fine arts; and his views are borne out in the *Memoire Historique*, by Santander, where an estimate is made of the principal historians and poets of Belgium. But what is still more honorable to the Flemings, as proving the superiority of their early literature over that of their neighbours, is the fact of the celebrated *Roman du Renard*, "History of Renard the Fox," translated into every language of modern Europe, having been originally composed in Flanders, and by a writer of that country. The manner in which this was proved to be the case, is not a little singular; the Belgian government made purchase at a sale in London—the Heber Library—of a rare Flemish MS. of this poem, of which M. Willems has just given a beautiful edition, with a dissertation and notes, in which, while he does justice to the vindicatory labors of the Germans, he sets the matter at rest by proving the title of the old Flemish writer. A modern Belgian translation of this work has also appeared in which the author, M. Delipierre, has gone into a very curious analysis of the different "Renards Français," and the opinions of several French writers on the origin of this old and very entertaining fable.

Let us now cast a glance at the early poetry of the Flemings in the epochs so intimately connected with their civil freedom and prosperity. We can

only regret the want of space which prevents the possibility of doing justice to this and so many other interesting questions connected with the intellectual character of the old Flemings, and its early development, while surrounding nations were sunk in despotic barbarism, and England herself was indebted for her grandest works of art in every branch to a succession of illustrious Flemish artists and scholars, to say nothing of the printers and editors of that enlightened people.

The *menestrels*, or poet musicians as they were called, will be found to yield in no way to those of France or Provence, and in addition to other sources, sufficient examples are afforded in the songs of Henri VII., duke of Brabant, about 1240; in those of Gilbert de Berneville, born at Courtray, who flourished about 1260; of Regnier de Quaregnon; Gonthier de Soignies, of Jean de la Fontaine, born at Tournay, besides a throng of others, who enjoyed a high reputation in their day, as the biographical work of M. Fetis has fully shown. The specimens of early Flemish poetry;—yet a desideratum in England, exhibit great poetical power, and characteristics of original and national production peculiarly their own. They prove to what an extent polite letters were formerly cultivated, when the greater part of Flemish princes, the merchant princes, and a few of the more enlightened sovereigns who usurped the title, made it their glory to

promote the labors and court the society of artists and great literary and scientific men. The munificent spirit of Margaret of Austria, who was born at Bruges, and who selected the objects of her regard with singular discernment, was herself possessed of poetic talent. Previous to the year 1794, there existed in the ducal library of Burgundy three MSS. volumes containing songs, many set to music, great part of which were of her composition. Towards the middle of the thirteenth century, Jean I., duke of Brabant, was famous for his easy errotic poetry, specimens of which have appeared in that magnificent work: "*Samlung der Minnsingeren,*" (1758, 2 vols. 4to,) which exhibit numerous exquisite fragments, some versions of which in modern French would gratify the taste of the poet, as much as the ear of the musician.

Three ages before, the Liegois, Raterus, bishop of Verona, embraced in himself the whole ecclesiastical literature of Italy, with the exception of Alton, bishop of Verceil. Lemaire, a Belgian, was the first to introduce those artful and pleasing changes in French verse which add so much to its sweetness and variety; to which Clement Marot was a comparative stranger, and yet adopted it with so much difficulty in his old age. The protectress of arts and sciences, Margaret of Austria, was passionately attached to these Belgic innovations in the form and expression of the old French rhymes; and she

delighted to compose the new ballads, and to sing them,—a task which gave rise to a farther succession of able and accomplished musicians, who spread themselves over all neighbouring lands, and became the restorers of the art in Europe. It will perhaps not be unappreciated by the fairer portion of our readers, should our restricted limits permit, to give a slight version of one or two of these poetic essays of a princess so celebrated, and of lofty intellect, who by her more than maternal care, formed all that was noble and magnanimous in the character of the emperor Charles V. Happy for him had she had the sole conduct of his education from his earliest years: their close had been different!

" Ce n'est pas jeu d'estre si fortunée
D'estre si fortunée,
Qu'eslonger fault de ce qu'on ayme bien.
Et je suis sceure que pas de lui ne vient,
Mais me procède de ma grant destinée,
Dites vous donc que je suis esgarée.
Quant je me vois separée de mon bien!
Ce n'est pas jeu d'estre si fortunée.

" Qu'eslonger fault de ce qu'on ayme bien.
J'ai le rebours de toute ma pensée;
Et sy n'ayme qui me conforte en rien;
De tout cecy je le porterray bien,
Mais que de luy je ne soys oubliée
Ce ne pas jeu," &c.

" Is it to be high born and great
To hold a solemn state,
Debarred the sight of him who fills my soul?
Fortune, is this thy sport, or fate's control?

His voice, his step no more I hear—
Come aid me then to pour the love-lorn sigh,
O'er the strange play of this high destiny,
Torn from his arms to shed th' unheeded tear,
Is it to be high born and great?

"Debarred the sight of him who fills my soul!
Is aye the burden of my thought and song;
And if I scorn what would my heart console
It is because I would not pass the goal,
Forgot by him—of all my earthly dole,
Is it to be high born and great?"

We might adduce several other specimens of a different character, had we more space; and in particular those selected by M. Santander in his pleasing work, full of historical interest, upon the library of the dukes of Burgundy. We must be content, however, with a single fragment in the following elegy.

"Cueurs desolez par toutes nations,
Deuil ensemblez et lamentations,
Plus ne querez l'harmonieuse lyre;
Lyesse, es bas et consolations
Laissez aller, prenez pleurs et passions
Et m'aydez tous à croistre mon martyre.
Cueurs désolez.

"De Orpheus pour vostre joye eslire
Ains vous plongez en desolations,
Venez à moy par mille legions.
Enfondez moi douleurs par millions!
Le noble et bon dont on ne peut mal dire
Le soutenant de tous sens contredire
Est mort, helas! quels maledictions.
Cueurs désolez."

"Weep, hearts! weep, loves of every clime,
And with my heart-strung notes keep time;
No longer seek the lyre's melodious measures,
Nor ease, nor joy, nor hopes yet more sublime;
Away with all; all fond conceits of rhyme.
Weep with me now; nor longer dream of pleasures.
Weep, hearts.

"Or, if you will, choose sorrowing Orpheus' lyre,
Strike deep the chords with passions strong,
Such as to legions of dread woes belong;
And so my griefs with yours I'll mingle long.
I saw the noble and the good expire,
Of whom none evil spake—so loved, so young,
Now dead, alas, the sad theme of my song.
Weep, hearts."

In the following there prevails a deep pathos and tenderness of regret, which reminds us strongly of the fine sonnet written by Gray on the death of his beloved friend West.

"Me faudra-t-il toujours ainsi languir,
Me faudra-t-il enfin ainsi mourir,
Nul aura-t-il de mon mal cognaissance?
Trop à duré, car c'est dès mon enfance.
Mestier en ai. Je le prends sur ma foy,
Car mon seul bien est souvent près de moy;
Mais pour les gens fault faire contenance.
Par quoy conclus seulette et à part moy
Qu'il me faudra user de pacience;
Las! c'est pour moy trop grande penitence,
Certes ouy, et plus quand ne le voy."

"And must I ceaseless pour these heart-drawn sighs,
Languish till death, nor see their faces more?—
The loved and lost! Will no sweet power restore
No pitying Heaven, one moment to my eyes

Their sainted forms! nor stem the griefs that rise,
Threatening to 'whelm me in the tempest's roar,
E'er since first cast on this bleak mortal shore;
Death-doomed if one stay not my destinies.
Need have I that He temper the rude blast
To my shorn joys—and pour no earthly balm
On the bow'd spirit's wounds—to others calm,
In semblance—patient, weeping o'er the past:
A penance all too great—if He who appears
Ready to save—I see not through these tears."

The death of this accomplished lady's brother, Philip le Beau, to whom she had been affectionately attached from her infancy; the early loss of her consort, Prince Juan, followed by that of her only son, may sufficiently account for the mournful tone, and the expression of deep melancholy which pervade these short but touching effusions of a gentle and sensitive mind; yet one capable of directing the reins of empire.

That the Flemish idiom, originally nearly the same as the pure German or tudesque, is sufficiently antique, would appear from its having been spoken by the first dynasty of kings of France, by many of the second, and by its having been the native tongue of Charlemagne himself.* Men connected with affairs of state were compelled to speak two languages, the Roman and the German. The latter only fell into desuetude at the commencement of the third race in France, and the Roman became the language both of the court and of the people. There remain

* *Recherches historiques et littéraires*, De Bast. Gand. 1815.

nevertheless, a number of literary monuments, which show what the ancient Flemish idiom was; but we can only afford to give a specimen from a war-song, composed on the defeat of the Normans in the year 885.

"Eenen Koning weet ik,	"I know a certain king,
Hy heet heer Lodewyk,	Lord Louis is his name,
Die geerne God dient,	Who willingly serves God,
Wyl God het hem loont.	And God rewards him well.
Kind, was hy vaderloos,	When he an orphan child,
Dit was hem zeer boos nadeelig."	Heaven let no harm betide him."

The author of this song, we learn from the "Soirées historiques" of M. Van Wyn, was a native of the province of Hainault, where the Teutonic, or tudesque, was still spoken in the twelfth century; and St. Norbert preached in this language at Valenciennes about the same period. The minstrel next informs us how God, wishing to try the faith of king Louis III., permitted the invasion of the Normans. At length, resolved to put a stop to their devastations, the bard is inspired to rouse the king to arms, and the monarch proceeds to harangue his soldiers:

"Lodewyk, mynen Koning.	"Up Louis, my brave king,
Help myne lieden!	Assist my war-song now.
Dan sprak luyd,	Then spoke the good king loud,
Lodewyk den goeden:	Be of good cheer, my friends,
Troost u, gezellen!	My relations in need!
Myne noodverwanten!	Here God has sent me to you."
Hier zond ny God."	

It would have been curious to compare this fragment with the famous song of Roland, so long discussed, but now unfortunately lost. The marquis de Paulmy, indeed, declares that he discovered some fragments in the old romancers, and he in fact composed several couplets, which he gave out as relics of a poem so celebrated during the middle ages. Perhaps a better title to originality has been advanced by the comte de Tressan, who rests it upon the tradition yet current among the people of the Pyrenées, and copied, from word of mouth, by the marquis de Viviers-Lansac. He thus transferred them into modern French.

O Roland! honneur de la France,
Que par toi mon bras soit vainqueur!
Dirige le fer de ma lance
A percer le front ou le cœur
Du fier ennemi qui s'avance.

Que le sang coulant à grands flots
De ses flancs ou de sa visière,
Bouillonne encore sur la poussière,
En baignant les pieds des chevaux!
O Roland! honneur de la France, &c.

The works of Jacques Van Maerlant,—the father of Flemish national poetry, are composed in nearly the same idiom that is spoken at this day, and display an elevated genius, lively fancy, and elegance of taste. He was a native of Damme, in Flanders; and was followed by the epic poet Van Heelu, who commemorated the exploits of Jean, first duke of Brabant; and the didactic writer

Gérard Van Lienhout, whose poem on the natural history of the universe, contains many beautiful and noble passages, not unworthy the Roman Lucretius. Several learned Germans have recently enriched their language with the works of the early Flemish poets; the number of whom, during the revival of the fine arts in Italy and Flanders, scarcely yield to those of the painters themselves. The labors also of native editors like Willems, Delmotte, De Reiffenberg, Delepierre, Serrure, have tended not a little to bring them into farther estimation, which they so well deserve. Nor was it only the poets; —during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the chroniclers and historians continued to enrich their native literature,—among whom, Van Velthem, De Klerk, and Jean de Weest, hold a high place. Casteleyn, surnamed by his contemporaries, the Excellent, from the equal beauty of his songs, his ballads, his dramas, and his critical treatises,—Corneille Van Ghistele, whose versions of Virgil, Terence, and Ovid gained him deserved applause,—J. B. Houwaert, who combined the most vivid imagination with the greatest erudition, and the most elegant taste, with a host of names we could cite, of not less national celebrity, in every department of literature,—have enlarged those treasures of learning, and of lighter productions, too many of which, owing to the devastations of war, and other political causes, have never yet seen the light. It would be difficult to mention a single town throughout

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Belgium, which does not contain in its archives, or in its history and traditions, sufficient evidence of the strong influence which poetry, as well as the sister arts, has exercised in every age over the national taste, the warm imagination, and the works of this enterprising and ingenious people.

One of our first visits in Malines (Anglicè Mechlin), as in other places, was to the metropolitan church. It is here dedicated to St. Rombold; was commenced in the tenth century, and not finally completed until the year 1452. In its structure it presents a specimen of the old Gothic, extremely regular, harmonious in its parts, and well proportioned. Its exterior aspect, with its noble tower, antique time-worn ornaments, and sculptured facings, give it at once a sombre and majestic appearance, with which the interior corresponds by the extent of the aisles, and in particular, of the vaulted dome which in a single arch, supports the massive tower, 375 feet in height. From the beauty of its construction, the boldness of the principle, and the masterly execution, this tower is justly considered among the finest specimens of Belgic architecture; it possesses two spacious staircases, consisting of 565 steps, and according to the plan originally adopted, would easily admit of being surmounted by a lofty spire. The belfry is on an equally extensive scale, and by the size of the bells the most powerful carillons are produced; besides a clock, the four sides of which embrace 144 feet in circumference. It is well worth

while to see the interior, which for its finished mechanism is extremely curious; * and you may also enjoy the advantage, on a clear day, of an extensive and diversified prospect—and with a good glass, far over towns, country, and sea. We beheld this antique and picturesque edifice exactly as the artist has represented it; groups of people in their peculiar costume, of different classes, but who appeared confounded, like ants or atomies, from its majestic summit. The tower is of more modern structure than the body of the building, and has a simple and rustic air. The exquisite perspective gives force to the truth of the delineation.

The high altar of marble is surmounted with three noble figures, the work of Faydherbe; and the splendid silver coffer, containing the relics of the saint, constructed on occasion of the jubilee in 1825, is deposited within the altar. The rich sculpture round the choir; the tombs of the archbishops, by the same artist, and by Vervoort; and of a number of others, distinguished in the civic annals; and near them a genius seen weeping, by a French sculptor, are all executed in tolerably

* A tradition is yet current of a report having been raised during the night that the great tower was on fire, which gave rise to a saying not very complimentary to the sagacity of the good people of Malines. On flocking together, and the engines appearing with every preparation, to extinguish the fire, it was discovered that the illusion was produced by the effect of the moon's rays reflected through the Gothic open work; when some Belgian wag observed, that "the wise men of Malines had tried to extinguish the moon."

good taste. In the centre of the choir is the communion table, very beautifully formed and richly sculptured, like the high altar in marble; and round the sides are some scripture-pieces—a St. Luke, painted by A. Janssens; the Holy Trinity, by Blommaerts, besides a small collection of antiquities. The hall of the chapter, likewise contains a series of portraits of the different archbishops of Malines.

At length, however, we approached the two fine altars in the centre, one of which contains that noble specimen of Vandyke, "Christ on the Cross," which has been restored to Belgium from the Musée at Paris; and, with regard to every attribute of art, it appeared fully worthy the genius of that great master. "This, perhaps," says Sir J. Reynolds, "is the most capital of all his works, in respect to the variety and extensiveness of the design, and the judicious disposition of the whole. In the efforts which the thieves make to disengage themselves from the cross, he has successfully encountered the difficulty of the art; and the expression of grief and resignation in the virgin is admirable. This picture upon the whole may be considered as one of the first pictures in the world, and gives the highest idea of Vandyke's powers; it shows that he had truly a genius for history-painting, if it had not been taken off by portraits. The coloring of this picture is certainly not of the brightest kind; but it seems as well to correspond

with the subject as if it had the freshness of Rubens."

Another fine composition, representing the Annunciation, is from the hand of Coxie, called the Raphael of the Low countries. Between these two altars and the choir are seen two pieces of sculpture, from the chisel of Faydherbe; the columns are enriched with figures of the twelve apostles, by Colin, and by the brothers, Van Milder. The chaire de verité, or pulpit, was carved by Boecksteyns, representing St. Paul's conversion,—the fallen saint and his horse; farther enriched by the famous carver and sculptor, Van Geel. In the side naves, we saw another collection of pictures, representing the history of St. Rombold. They were painted by Lens, on occasion of another great jubilee in 1775, assisted by Herreyns Verhaegen, Croquart, Pery, and De Halt. The angel seen conducting St. Rombold, and the latter exhorting a crowd of workmen, are nobly executed by Lens, and worthy his efforts to regenerate the old Flemish school. Other specimens are not without merit, in particular St. Rombold receiving his mission from Pope Stephen II. The same in the act of reprimanding a workman; the saint found dead; and the conversation between St. Rombold and St. Gommaire; the three first by Herreyns; and the fourth, the chef d'œuvre of Verhaegen. Again, we observed a few of superior execution in the side chapels, among others an interesting scripture-

piece by Quellyn—the Adoration of the shepherds, and another excellent one by Crayer, in the chapel of the Virgin. Near the grand entrance, no one can pass unnoticed the two fine groups, executed by Faydherbe; the whole portal is a fine imitation of the high altar, and it is surmounted by three figures from the chisel of F. Van Geel. The figure of a Christ beautifully cut in ivory, adorns one of the altars of the smaller chapels; and this church may boast one of the richest collections of massy ornaments and plate connected with the service of Catholic worship.

The road by which the railway passes from Malines to Antwerp, continued to give evidence, on all sides, of the constant attention and unwearied industry of all classes, in regard to the cultivation of the soil. Even close to the towns and villages, we observed the mechanics,—and the best operatives in other labors, we uniformly find the most perfect in gardening and agriculture, — busily engaged on their little cottage-grounds; in other parts, on the hop-grounds, trimming the vines over their walls,—carefully weeding the growing crops of rye, beet, or linseed; and as evening advanced, we saw different groups, both of field laborers and mechanics reposing, after their toils, seated before their doors, conversing with that cheerfulness and ease which showed a certain sense of independence and freedom. Some of them would offer good studies to the Teniers and Ostades

of their day, as we saw them in the calm evening sunset, with an expanding landscape around us, and the towers of Antwerp in the distance. As we marked their growing shadows on the plain, we turned to the pages of Wordsworth and Southey, which so exquisitely describe the scene. Groups of women and children seated in the open air, attired in their antique and quaint costume, busily engaged in plying their respective labors, with that air of vivacity and resignation mingled, which make you love them as you pass by,—presented another characteristic variety in Belgian cottage life, which often greets the eye and cheers the heart, of the early morning and late evening traveller.

"Dear honest race, though now we meet no more,
One last long look on what we were before,
Our first kind greetings, and our last adieu,
Drew tears from eyes unused to weep with you."

CHAPTER IX.

Antwerp—Historical Sketch—Naval and Commercial Fame—Sufferings under Philip II. and the Duke of Alba—Memorable Defence—Its City Capitulation—Treaties, &c.—View of Trade and Commerce—National Customs—Interior of St. Paul's Church—Paintings and other Objects of Art—The Town Hall—The Citadel—House of Rubens, &c.

THE early traditionary history of a Belgian city like Antwerp, is that of Bruges, as we have given it, and also of most others; and we pass at once to the more interesting events which marked the fortunes of this once splendid fortress,—the "sea Cybele," and an almost impregnable bulwark by land, in the middle ages. The heritage successively of kings of the French till the tenth century; of the dukes of Brabant, under whom it rose into importance, repulsed the Normans, became the mart for the booty of the sea-pirates, from plundered Britain, or won upon the high seas, it continued to

flourish, till it fell into the withering grasp of modern Spain and Austria. In this also it resembled Bruges, that, from being enemies, the Normans, and other invaders, soon became friends and merchants, though at the expense of the rest of the world. In the eleventh century, the herring fisheries, and the gradual commerce to which they gave rise, produced so marked an influence, that in the ensuing age entire fleets were equipped and prosecuted an extensive trade to the east, to the different European ports, and in particular to Spain and Portugal. Internal trade and manufactories of various kinds, with admirable skill in the ingenious and useful arts, carried the reputation and prosperity of Antwerp into every country; nor was any city and its subject towns more formidable on the ocean or in the field, insomuch that foreign powers were extremely desirous of recruiting their armies from Brabant and Flanders, distinguished for martial spirit; and among whose youth in the middle ages, chivalry was a favorite pursuit. The popular motto selected at the tournament or in the day of battle, was—"let each now think of her he loves."

Commerce and liberty are almost reciprocal terms; and when to these we add the revival of the arts, the reformation, the spread of science, the superior knowledge which confers power—whether intellectual, moral, or of mere brute force—we shall be at no loss for the causes which raised the

free dominion of Antwerp to a pitch of wealth and luxury always favorable to the development of literature and the fine arts. Its architectural genius, in particular, shone resplendent during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when it produced those grand examples which still attest its superiority, and sent forth its master-minds into every civilized city of modern Europe. It is impossible for a stranger, to behold for the first time the cathedrals, palaces, and town-houses of that period; the vastness, solidity, and magnificence, combined with simplicity, which characterise those of Antwerp, without surprise and admiration, how, in so brief a lapse of time, in seasons of tumult, civil and political conflicts, a single city of merchants could exhibit, amidst comparative European barbarism, so noble a spectacle of the magical results of free trade and self-government. Nor had it less effect on the productions of intellect,—on the refined spirit, the buoyant character, the taste, and opulence of this favored people. In its poetry, music, painting, its schools, theatres, halls of rhetoric, it kept pace with Italy, and supplied England and France with a succession of able masters who became the favorites of courts, and produced a new era in the cultivation and more general diffusion of a love of letters; and while some raised princely palaces and lordly mansions, others decorated them with their paintings; and a third made the halls resound with strains of delightful

minstrelsy.* In mechanical science also, and in the various trades and professions depending upon it, Antwerp rose into rapid and well-deserved celebrity, and was early resorted to by foreigners for the purposes of traffic, and acquiring a knowledge of new and improved processes, as in polishing and cutting diamonds, painting on glass, the new carillons, fine lace, tapestry, dyes; while to increase its taste and commerce, the discovery of America, and the decay of several great Italian cities, gave a new and unexpected impulse.

The reign of Charles V., while it conferred greater stability on some of its laws and institutions, restricted the privileges and exhausted the wealth of the merchants of Antwerp; and Philip II., by his bigotry and cruelty, sacrificed its liberties to a despotic clergy, and that destructive edict, which gave them the power of reducing every people to the same level of political and religious degradation. The establishment of the inquisition, and the military despotism of Alva, carried the sufferings of the unhappy people of Antwerp to their climax; and the Council of blood, as it was justly termed, destroyed, with reckless ferocity, the noblest, the most wealthy, the most worthy and innocent. Even the burgomaster, Van Shattan, his relatives and friends, were not spared; their property was

* Guicciardini also acknowledges the obligations of Italy to Flemish musicians.

confiscated; and they fell, like felons or murderers, by the hands of the common executioner.

It was not till he had almost deprived the Netherlands of its best and noblest citizens,—till upwards of 18,000 inhabitants had perished on the scaffold, that Alva was recalled, when he returned to Spain, gorged with plunder, and loaded with the execrations of the people. On the fatal 3rd of November, 1576, it was sacked during three days by the Spanish soldiery; churches, palaces, and private mansions, were plundered, numbers of citizens perished in the Scheld; the losses were estimated at 2,000,000 golden crowns, and splendid monuments and works participated in the general destruction. In 1583, the duke of Alençon and Anjou, who had been created duke of Brabant, in the view of rendering himself absolute in the Low countries, had the ingratitude and audacity to attack the city, which he had bound himself to protect, and in the guise of peace, surprised and took military possession of the place. The citizens and people, however, flew to arms, the French were driven from the streets and ramparts, the cannon was turned against the enemy, and the duke with difficulty escaped to Fermonde; and in 1584 died, it is supposed, of chagrin, at Chateau Thierry, despised and detested by all parties and religious persuasions, for his duplicity and cowardice.

In the year 1584, Antwerp sustained a siege of

fourteen months by the famous duke of Parma, during which the besieged behaved with the utmost gallantry, and exhausted, in their defence, all the resources of the military art. The Scheld was closed, their communication with Zealand cut off, and their last hope was the destruction of the Spanish works on the bridge. Assisted by an Italian engineer, Giambelli, they constructed a number of fire ships, and made a desperate attack, with these infernal machines, which presented the strange spectacle of vast masses of flame rushing down the river directly against the terrific barrier which had cost immense toil and money to raise. The prince and his army were struck aghast; soon the entire river appeared a sheet of flame; far and wide, the city, the camp, the least objects on the enormous bridge, in the fleet, and in the forts, grew distinct as at noon-day, and the illumination of the surrounding country is described as grand in the extreme, contrasted with the murky blackness of the sky. One of the ships burst with a fearful crash, before it gained the intended point; the prince and his officers rushed to give orders at the bridge; and at that instant another report was heard; the bridge of boats was forced; and one of the fire ships struck the escoccades. Still undismayed, Parma continued on the spot, and must have perished had not his officers removed him; for scarcely had he reached the bank when a third machine blew up. The bridge now wholly gave

way; the escoccade was shattered, and with its machinery the men were seen blown into the air. The marquis Rouvais and a number of distinguished officers perished; the waters, forced from their bed, rushed into the forts; and the earth trembled as with an earthquake. The prince himself was struck senseless; two of his generals were severely wounded; and it was thought that if the Zeeland fleet had arrived at that moment, the beleaguered city would have succeeded in raising the siege. But now, in their extremity, devoured at once by the sword and by famine, the citizens had recourse to the means adopted by those at Leyden, which, at the eleventh hour snatched the place from destruction. This was to cut through the immense dyke, and inundate the whole plain up to the very walls of Antwerp. But the prince was in possession of the counterdyke of Kouwenstein, and it was necessary to the garrison to obtain the temporary command of it. To attain this object one of the most desperate and well-sustained attacks ever recorded was commenced on this point; the battle raged throughout the night and day,—at the close of which the confederates were driven into the city, with the loss of 3,000 men. Another powerful vessel was next constructed, boldly entitled the *End of the War*. It resembled an armed floating citadel; was directed against the enemy's fortifications, but most unfortunately it ran aground, and

the governor, Philip de Marnix, lord of Aldegonde, was at length reduced to capitulate.

In April, 1609, a treaty was entered into for twelve years between Belgium and the United Provinces, which was signed at Antwerp. After the battle of Ramilies, it fell to the duke of Marlborough, was taken by the French in 1746, and restored to Austria by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle in 1784. Subsequently to the French revolution, it was frequently contested for by these powers, but continued in possession of the former till 1815, when it was surrendered by the celebrated Carnot to the British troops under the command of General Graham. At the general peace, Antwerp, as is well known, was apportioned, with the rest of Belgium, to William I. to form part of the kingdom of the Netherlands, till, having undergone another revolution, and another memorable siege, it constituted part of an independent kingdom which was offered to Leopold I. "Roi des Belges" on the 21st of July, 1831.

In the early part of the 16th century, Antwerp numbered upwards of 2,000,000 inhabitants; was the greatest manufacturing town in Europe, and the general mart of the Hanse towns, and the republics of Italy. They were more celebrated as factors and bankers than as merchants; for they had carriers in Genoa and Venice, who brought here their produce from the India trade by way of the Red Sea, Egypt, and Alexandria, previous to

the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope. During the bitter days of her persecutions, Antwerp, which had found a market for her linen, carpets, and cloths in England enriched that country likewise by an immense immigration of the industrious classes, who carried with them the elements and materials of fresh wealth and prosperity. One of the quays was early known as the English, and the street where their Exchange was situated, is still known as the Englesche Beurs. A number of British merchants also visited the city to exchange the productions of their soil for the manufactures of the Flemings. In the time of Charles V. the port was so thronged with vessels, that separate fleets were obliged to touch in the Scheld before there was room for their admission to discharge their cargoes. Out of a population at that period of 200,000, the proportion belonging to the useful arts was almost incredible. There were 350 painters; 300 silversmiths and jewellers; 600 vessels entered the port daily, while 2500 lay at anchor before the city. The land carriage from France and Germany was proportionably great; six hundred millions of florins was the average circulation yearly, and the amount of imposts was not less than two millions.

The history of the trade and commerce, and the accumulation of property, in this enterprising city would in itself form an interesting work; the feasts and galas given by the great citizens rivalled those of the proudest courts; and on one occasion Charles

V. was sumptuously entertained at the table of M. Daems. And, at the close, the magistrates and other citizens who had advanced the monarch large sums, threw into a fire of cinnamon a bond for 200,000 ducats, declaring that it was more than cancelled by the honor he had conferred upon them. "My friends," replied this truly magnanimous prince, "the nobles pillage me, the literary men instruct me, but the merchants enrich me." On another occasion, the town of Mechlin sent a a deputation to this great city, composed of 326 horsemen attired in fine satin and velvets richly embroidered, those of Brussels exceeded 340 equally well equipped, attended by seven triumphal chariots, and eighty carriages; an astonishing number at a period when they were rarely seen in other states. Afterwards, when the son of their favorite emperor, Charles V. visited the city, they spent not less than 130,000 gold crowns, though it failed to soften the ferocious bigotry and cruelty of the tyrant in whose honor it was lavished.

The Antwerpers had other and more secret enemies; Amsterdam eagerly sought its ruin, and contemporary history informs us that the Prince of Orange, Frederick Henry, threatened to subdue them so effectually that they should never recover their former prosperity and fame. Accordingly, in the treaty of Munster, on the 30th of January, 1648, it was stipulated, in favor of the Dutch, that the Scheld should be closed; nor was it till the French

revolution, and the treaty concluded at the Hague in 1795, that it was again opened; when its commerce had been almost effectually destroyed. Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and other towns, rose into wealth and distinction upon its ruins, and beheld the object of their jealous fears shorn of its ancient strength and grandeur, while the rich argosies, from which they had shut her out, supplied an active internal trade, and opened the way to new ships and colonies. But the men of Antwerp were at least as wise in their generation as their enemies, and adopted the best policy they could—that of following the wealth and commerce which had deserted them; numbers of eminent citizens emigrated to Holland, where they found an asylum from fanatical and political persecution; where they realised fortunes, and, becoming permanently settled, dealt a fresh blow at the prosperity of their native city. These events wrought a marked change in the disposition, habits, and mode of conducting business of the Antwerpers; economy took the place of a liberal affluence; the old public spirit had received its death-blow; gradual saving and accumulation, opposed to the general and civil interests, narrowed the sphere of enterprise and the amount of circulation, and Antwerp slowly adapted itself to new circumstances, to another and inferior state of things. Upon the incorporation with France, and subsequently with Holland, a gleam of its former prosperity shone upon the crumbling walls and

deserted port of the citadel of the sea; it found colonies to take off its manufactures at advanced prices, and, by its junction with Holland in particular, it seemed to behold once more the El Dorado of the East. It offered, in fact, the best depôt for the shipping of goods, and a grand market for colonial produce; so that, in the three years succeeding the great panic in England of 1825, a sufficient number of hands could not be found for unloading the immense arrivals of goods. With reason, for a time at least, may the commercial and industrious classes of Antwerp, if not of Belgium itself, deplore the event of the revolution which bade its new visions of prosperity vanish—an unsubstantial dream. Antwerp, nevertheless, and Belgian enterprise in general, have done much, and are doing more, to obviate the evils of the sudden change and the circumstances in which it has placed them; fresh channels for the national manufactures are the incessant study of a legislature at once popular and closely identified with the interests of the people; and it is not improbable that the course of events may rather favor than retard the acquisition of advantages so just and so desirable. It has already that of being in the vanguard of European science and civilization; if it can only consolidate and extend the institutions which it has, at so much sacrifice, acquired.

The people of Antwerp, are remarkable for their attachment to former customs and manners; and

T. Allom. J.C. Varrall.

Church of St. Paul's.

their amusements still partake of their original character. Archery, in particular, maintains its ascendency; both without the city, we were told, and throughout the province, a pole is affixed to the ground, and on the summit is placed an iron grate which supports rows of wooden birds, which appear by distance to be reduced to the size of larks. On holidays and Sunday evenings, the archers assemble to shoot, and prizes are distributed to the most successful. The flying of carrier pigeons, the antiquity of which vouches for its utility in other times, is still kept up, and prizes are awarded to those whose pigeons reach home in the least possible time. They are sent to Paris, London, and more distant cities, and, among other correspondence, is that carried on for the state of prices to give early intelligence of the markets to dealers in stock and foreign funds.

The church of St. Paul, or the Dominicans, which we first visited, contains some excellent paintings; one or two by Rubens, and another by his great pupil, Vandyke. This edifice, constructed in 1679, is considered by good Catholics to have miraculously escaped the ravages of civil tumults and foreign wars, and is proportionally more rich in ornaments of every kind. The chief altars in particular are of exquisite workmanship; formed of white marble, and elaborately as well as profusely decorated with all the ingenuity of that more splendid and costly time. A fine perspective is produced

by the side aisle, and confessionals in the repetition of figures, the exquisite carvings, surmounted by copies of Rubens, and his own grand picture at the extremity. The effect too of the sun light in the side chapel is peculiarly striking, as well as the picture of the Virgin over the side altar. Upon first entering the enclosure of this magnificent and extensive pile, we behold the statues of the twelve apostles, and those of the four evangelists. There is also what is called a representation of mount Calvary, exhibiting in a rude sketch the wild grandeur of a scene crowded with patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, raised by an artificial eminence against the walls of the church; but in barbarous taste. Below the rock is seen the tomb of Christ, containing an image shrouded in superb silk, and surrounded by a vivid picture of purgatory. The walls are also decorated with bas-reliefs, exhibiting the different events of the passion and crucifixion of the Redeemer. The first pictures which struck us on entering the western porch were the "Seven Acts of Mercy and Benevolence," by Teniers the father; and Christ walking towards Emmaus with the two disciples, by Quellyn. Other scripture pieces by Van Baelen, Franck, De Vos, and Voet are favorable specimens of those masters; and one of Christ praying in the garden, by Teniers, is excellent in point of composition and coloring. We passed over some others till we came to the Vandyke—a Christ bearing his cross, a picture in several respects very

like the works of Rubens; and more than usually so the figure with his back towards the spectator, which, like the entire work, is beautifully and correctly drawn.

Two good paintings by Jordaens, in the manner of Rubens, next met our eye; but without allowing ourselves to be detained by these and a few other masters, my friend directed my attention to a specimen, by some considered the *chef d'œuvre* of Rubens,* the Flagellation. This picture, though admirably painted, is disagreeable to look at; the black and bloody stripes are marked with too much fidelity, and some of the figures are awkwardly scourging with the left hand.† There is "an Adoration of the Shepherds," also attributed to Rubens, but there is nothing in the picture by which his manner can be with certainty recognised; there are parts which were certainly not painted by him, particularly the drapery of the virgin. An altar-piece by Sallaert, represents a council of bishops, and corresponding with it is another by Crayer. The body of the Saviour is supported by the Magdalen, St. John, and angels; and a third, of St. Dominic, by the same artist, are works of superior merit. The Disciples of Emmaus, by Quellyn, and a copy of Caravaggio, St. Dominic distributing the rosary to the people, by De Quartemont, also deserve notice.

* Born at Cologne, in the year 1577, and died at Antwerp on the 30th of May, 1640.

† Sir J. Reynolds.

The original was transferred to the gallery of Vienna by Joseph II. during his visit to the Low countries, who undertook to have a copy taken of it at his own expense. The painting over the grand altar was made at Rome by M. Cels, a modern artist, who appears to no disadvantage, though surrounded by *chefs d'œuvres* of the art. The marble altar was the work of Verbruggen, as well as the noble statue of St. Paul, by which it is surmounted, and both were presented by the learned Ambrose Capello, of the order of Dominicans, and who became bishop of Antwerp. Besides these we noticed two fine marble statues, one of St. Rose, by A. Quellyn, and the other a Virgin in grief, by De Baurschiet.

The organ of this church, as well as the interior decorations of every kind, is a flattering proof of the good taste, no less than the wealth, of the Dominicans; it is of grand compass, and nothing can be finer than the effect of a full choir of anthems swelling through the lofty aisles.

We now entered the church of the Augustins to see the altar-piece of the Virgin and Child, surrounded by saints, a genuine production of Rubens, which displays singular skill in the grouping of an immense number of figures, and is considered by Sir J. Reynolds as one of the most considerable of his scripture pieces. "I confess," he says, "I was so overpowered with the brilliancy of this picture whilst I was before it, and under its fascinating influence, that I thought I had never before seen so great

powers exerted in the art. It was not till I was removed from its influence that I could acknowledge any inferiority in Rubens to any other painter whatever." In the figure of St. George the painter, as was so very frequently done both by Italian and Flemish masters, introduced a portrait of himself; it prevailed before the time of Da Vinci, of Memling, and the Van Eycks. The Ecstasy of St. Augustine by Vandyke, and so celebrated on the continent, is a singular specimen for its want of the usual correctness and chasteness of that great master. It disappointed the expectations of Sir Joshua; but he at once accounted for part of its deficiency from the colors having suffered some change, and being no longer as Vandyke left them. The head of the elderly woman is a portrait of the artist's mother, and is one of the best drawn in the picture, as the angel seen sitting on a cloud is the best of the entire group. Owing to the injury or decay of the colors, the boy with a sceptre is out of all harmony with the sky; the picture is thus wanting in effect from the loss of light; and the two angles consequently form small masses of equal magnitude.

This is not the sole specimen which shows there was something unfortunate with regard to Vandyke's coloring, or that time and accident have been less lenient to him than to his great and fortunate master, Rubens. The matyrdom of St. Apollonius by Jordaens is admirable in many respects, but the fore-shortening of the horse seen in the act of biting

his knee, is not quite correct, though his horses were considered little inferior to those of Rubens.

In the church of St. Anthony of Padua we next saw a Dead Christ, ascribed, without merit to substantiate the attribute, to Vandyke, and a Virgin and Child appearing to St. Francis, by Rubens, of which Sir Joshua observes, without questioning their genuineness, "that the Virgin and Christ are in a wretched bad manner, and the characters are vulgar; that there is nothing excellent in the picture but the head of St. Francis." The church of St. Carlos Borromeus, called the Jesuit's, has a very handsome façade; and was built from the designs, and under the direction of Rubens. He took proportionate pleasure in decorating this splendid temple, and scattered the riches of his art with a profuse hand. But fire, war, and the Iconoclasts appear to have formed a league against the most splendid emanations of the human mind in all times and ages; maintaining the grand principle of dissolution and destruction against that of creation, its glory and its beauty,—and thus fared it with the divinest examples of the great masters of antiquity and their followers. Even the thunderbolt has spared not the genius and enthusiasm of years; and in 1718 it destroyed the edifice dedicated to the wisest and most humane of Christian philosophers, a man who devoted talent, wealth, and nobility to the elevation and the relief of his fellow-creatures of whatever class. All that escaped the conflagration was the tower, part of the façade, the sacristy, and

the little chapel of Notre Dame. The splendid marbles imported from Italy; the works of Rubens, the sculpture of Michael and of Cellini, golden vases, and of jasper and porphyry, fell an indiscriminate prey. Two pictures only were saved, and they were destined to decorate the gallery of Vienna. The ensuing year the church was rebuilt in its present form; but sufficient of the antique remains to prove how good an architect as well as a painter was the Seignieur de Steens,—and in every branch. The façade, however, did not appear to him imposing enough, and he constructed the succession of edifices nearly opposite, to prevent its being seen at too great a distance. But the decorations of the entablature were disposed in very bad taste by a Jesuit brother, charged with the direction of the new edifice. The chapel of the Virgin, abounding in rich marbles, possesses an altar-piece representing St. Simeon with the infant in his arms, in the act of raising his eyes to heaven in thankfulness for having lived to see the Saviour of the world—a good production by De Lin. The small pictures round the altar are from the hand of H. Van Baelen; and below the windows are an Adoration of Shepherds by Van Loon, and the Annunciation of the Virgin by Vander Borght, which are also of superior merit.

There are numerous other paintings and statues by artists of no mean merit; the Assumption of the Virgin over the high altar by De Schut; figures by Quellyn; a beautiful piece by Seghers; a statue of

the Virgin of Seven Griefs by Quellyn—the communion-table by the same—a splendid specimen by Crayer, and another by Vandyke's pupil Janssens, of the twelve apostles, are, with many, many more, included in the treasures of Rubens' favorite but unfortunate church.

St. Andrew was founded, 1529, by the chapter of the cathedral, at the special instigation of one ever active in good and great works—Margaret, erroneously called of Austria. We saw a specimen of Quellyn, which has often been attributed, for its exceeding beauty and correctness, to Vandyke. A guardian angel is seen, covering a young man with a shield, launching its weapon against Vice and pleasure under the form of women of the world. The Disciples of Emmaus, by the same; a copy of Rubens' Flagellation, and other pieces too numerous for mention, complete the possessions of this early founded and interesting church. On the south side we observed a mausoleum raised by some English ladies to the memory of Mary Stuart, and decorated with a portrait of that unfortunate princess; which, for fine expression and harmony of colors, might be taken for a Vandyke. The high altar is by Verbruggen—the bas-reliefs are relics of the famous old abbey of St. Bernard. Numerous statues, and a finely carved pulpit by Van Hool render this edifice rich and grand in its illustrations.

The museum, an academy of painting, is built on the site of the suppressed convent of Recollets in the rue

des Fagots. Here, encased in glass, we saw the chair of Rubens—for in Antwerp his fame seems to meet you everywhere—once the president of the society; and the richest collection of his and his great pupil's works now grace its walls. There are at least fifteen of the former, and six undoubted specimens of Vandyke; besides other excellent specimens of Quentin Matsys, Floris, called the Flemish Raphael, and other pieces. These require only general mention; but it is different with the former. The Dead Christ in the arms of the Virgin, by Rubens, is pronounced by Sir Joshua, to be one of his most studied pictures; the Mary Magdalen weeping, is in the highest style of beauty; insomuch, that, it forms an exception to the general rule of his superiority being confined to paintings on a great scale. The Virgin, holding an infant Jesus, and a Holy Family, are both inferior productions; but again he shines forth in the Crucifixion between the two Thieves, a subject which he has handled in the most masterly manner. "The genius of Rubens," says Sir J. Reynolds, "nowhere appears to more advantage than here; it is the most carefully finished picture of all his works. The whole is conducted with the most consummate art; the composition is bold and uncommon, with circumstances which no other painter had ever before thought of. It is here, and in such compositions, we properly see Rubens, and not in little pictures of Madonnas and Bambinos. I have dwelt longer on this picture than any other, as it

appears to me to deserve extraordinary attention; it is certainly one of the first pictures in the world for composition, coloring, and, what was not to be expected from Rubens, correctness of drawing."

A St. Theresa, by the same artist, is also in his best manner, and the Trinity, Christ lying dead in the arms of God the Father, evinces great skill in drawing and foreshortening. The Adoration of the Magi is another of his grand composite pieces, in which he so much excels. The Virgin teaching St. Anne; the Communion of St. Francis; Christ showing his wound to St. Thomas, have great merit; but they are unequal as works of art. The works of Vandyke consist of a Crucifixion; St. Catherine, at the feet of Christ and St. Dominic, admirably drawn and colored, with a breadth of light preserved over the body of the Saviour, which forms a character of the most elegant kind. The Dead Christ on the knees of the Virgin is one of Vandyke's most chaste and beautiful specimens; but its colors are faded. The expression of grief is wonderfully told; and the same subject is repeated in a different manner—admirable for the beauty of the Virgin's head and the exquisite drawing of the Christ. The two others are portraits of Cesar Scaglia, and of Malderus, bishop of Antwerp; executed with his usual graphic power and felicity. Some specimens of Seghers, Schut, Ambrose Franks, and Cornelius de Vos; and the Death of Rubens, by Van Bree, a modern president of the Academy,

possess nothing that calls for particular commendation.

The private galleries in Antwerp are as numerous as they are well selected; and far too extensive to enter into any analysis of them. A simple application to the proprietor is sufficient, without formal introductions, to gain admission, and, in cases where we happened to be unprovided with these, we never experienced the slightest difficulty. That of M. Steencruys, rue de Mai, is well and even curiously filled, not only with some good paintings, but with antiquities. Nor are those of De Pret, Van Cam, Baillie, Snyers, Herry, Geelhand, Ullens, Verhaegen, Weber, and Serigiers, without various and manifold attractions. There is also a Royal Society for the encouragement of the Fine Arts, patronised by the most eminent citizens, and under the protection of the king. A grand saloon for the exhibition both of Belgian and foreign art is opened once every three years, alternately with Ghent and Brussels. At the close, a committee superintends the selection of the best works, of which a lottery is formed for the benefit of distinguished pupils, and, being confined to subscribers, the plan is productive of good as well to the members as to the artists. M. Van Lancker's gallery, sold in 1835, showed the good taste and spirit with which private collections are formed in Antwerp, and the general enthusiasm which still prevails in regard to the arts. In the extent and beauty of its public edifices; the size of its quays, bridges, and canals; its river-

gates, iron bridge, magnificent docks and basins — the gigantic effort of Napoleon to make her the rival of England; in her theatres, banks, club-houses, her gardens and public walks, few cities, even the capitals of extensive countries, can be placed in competition with the antique magnificence of the city of Rubens and Vandyke.

The *Hôtel de Ville* is here not to be compared with some others more antique and splendid in regard to extent or decorations, but the front is of very composite architecture. It consists of all the five orders, raised upon a sub-basement of the rustic, which forms the basis of the whole. The centre is elevated, and gives a commanding air to the inferior parts of the edifice; it is supported by red marble columns, and decorated with a number of emblematical statues of white marble. In length it extends to 260 feet; the foundation is of free stone, one of which bears the following inscription, "*Senatus Anverpiensis in die* 27 *Februarii, anno nativitatis Christi,* 1560. In fact this public edifice, as it now appears, was built upon the site of that burnt down in the sack of the town by the Spaniards, in 1546, and was rebuilt in 1560. There is a picture preserved in the *Bureau de l'Etat civil,* which forms the subject of this fearful event, when the lives as well as the property of a great and enlightened city, were for three days at the mercy of a fanatic and infuriated soldiery.

The architect of the town hall of Antwerp, was C. de Orendt, more commonly known by the name

of Floris. Among the principal apartments through which we passed, we noticed the Biblioteque de la Ville, which contains a large and useful collection of books and manuscripts in various languages; and it is open for the convenience of the public daily from one till five. The passport office is the depository of the passports of foreigners, received on their arrival, and returned upon application, opies of which were formerly taken, and a great deal of useless trouble occasioned, which is now very properly dispensed with. It was upon the turret of the town hall, that, during the continuance of the French dominion, a government telegraph was erected to convey the speediest intelligence to the head imperial quarters at Paris, or elsewhere, in the grand campaigns of struggling Europe; and in particular, of Spain, when the jealousy and vigilance of Napoleon was specially directed towards England. The office is open for strangers from nine till half-past three. According to law, a notice of an intended marriage is required to be affixed on the town hall, for the space of fifteen days; and this is tantamount to the publication of magisterial banns before marriage, although the ceremony is generally repeated by the priests in their respective districts. In Belgium, in fact, marriage is regarded merely in the light of a civil contract, though the parties are at liberty to give it the further sanction of religious obligation at their good pleasure.

From the town hall we proceeded to the citadel, a vast and magnificent pile, replete with historical associations, from former, as well as more modern events. It is composed of a series of bastions, which protect each other; pentagonal in its form, and a mile in circumference, it contains barracks, a military parade, several wells, and casemates, or subterraneous passages. This formidable place was first begun by the duke of Alva, in 1567, from designs by the engineer Paciotti, who gave his name to one of the bastions; and the other four were appropriately called after the tyrant,—*Fernando*, *Toledo*, *Duke*, and *Alva*, which they retain to this day. Few of the sieges it sustained, surpassed in gallantry the defence made by General Chassé, in 1832. The forts on each side the Scheldt being in possession of the Dutch, gave them a great advantage, only to be counteracted by employing a large force to blockade the mouth of the river, and a numerous army under Marshal Girard, exceeding 60,000 men, with an enormous train of artillery. The immense mortar called the "*Mortier Monstre*," and which weighed not less than 15,000lb., was brought from Liege, and discharged bombs two feet in diameter, sufficient to destroy the strongest building on which they might fall. After a protracted but admirably conducted siege, the brave governor and his garrison were compelled to surrender to a force so overwhelming, —but not before 14090 mètres of trenches had

been opened, and 63,000 cannon balls fired at the citadel. The prince royal of France, and his brother, the duke of Nemours, were present, and frequently took their station in the trenches, displaying a coolness that would have done credit to the oldest veteran.

The tribute of our next visit was paid to genius of a different kind,—all that remains of the palace-mansion of the princely-minded Rubens. His attachment to Antwerp is well known; and on his return from his travels and long residence in England, he here raised a delightful and commodious dwelling-place for the close of his bright and fortunate career, surrounded by handsome grounds and gardens; and here, inspired afresh by the splendid models of art which he had collected, he continued to produce many of those master-pieces which have enriched the churches, palaces, and private houses, of this celebrated city. We can now scarcely form an idea * of what this mansion once was; a comparatively splendid ruin has usurped the social joy and grandeur of other days,—an involuntary reverence, mingled with regret, steals over the spirit,—the imagination is busy with the scenes of the past; and the vivid creations of his mind seem to start up before us.

* A correct idea, however, may be formed from two rare prints in possession of M. De la Croix,—one representing the front of Rubens' house; and the other, the court yard and gardens.

CHAPTER X.

Advantages of Church-hours in Belgium—Cathedral of Nôtre Dame—Western Entrance—Opinions of Sir J. Reynolds—Anecdotes and Traits—Lofty and Courteous Character of Rubens—The High Altar—Paintings—Favorite of Sir J. Reynolds—Pictorial Policy of Napoleon—Principal West Front—Works by various Artists—An Extraordinary Genius—Number of Institutions.

It is always pleasant to a stranger or a tourist to visit public edifices, without the ceremony of an introduction, through a string of petty authorities and hangers on. Fortunately, the churches in Belgium are open from six in the morning till twelve at noon, and from half past four to six; affording ample time for all to enter without asking any one's permission—a circumstance favorable for diffusing a love of the arts, if not of piety and mental repose. It was in this way we entered Notre Dame, the cathedral of Antwerp, "one of the grandest pieces of architecture," we perfectly agree with Sir Walter Scott, which Europe can show. The long-drawn aisles and lofty arches seem almost the work of demigods, so much does the art and toil bestowed surpass what modern times can

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West Front of Cathedral of Notre Dame

Antwerp

present. In point of extent alone, it is sufficient to excite the astonishment of the beholder;—and when we talk of 500 feet in length, and 250 in breadth, including only the nave and aisles, we seem at once to approach the giant churches and castles of the middle ages. The height from the ground to the ceiling of the centre nave, is 360 feet; and 125 noble Gothic pillars, some of them twenty-seven feet in circumference, support this massive structure. Every other part corresponds in vastness and magnificence,—the lofty unrivalled tower,*—the nave with its triple row of aisles, the sweep of the sublime arches; the grandeur of the altars constructed of pure marble, and the richly painted windows which cast their mellow subdued light over all. But when added to these, it is seen, as we beheld it, under the richly-varied and grand illumination of a set-

* At the foot of the tower is seen the epitaph of the celebrated Queutin Matsys, commonly known as the blacksmith of Antwerp. Born at Antwerp in 1460, he abandoned the sledge hammer and the anvil, and became a suitor for the hand of the daughter of Floris, who was resolved to bestow her only upon one of his own profession. The blacksmith, to place himself on a level with his rival, painted in secret day and night. The only moments of relaxation were passed in the society of her he loved. After intense labor, and many efforts, he at length succeeded in producing a picture with which the father was so much delighted that he instantly consented to make the lovers happy. An inscription under his portrait alludes to this incident, and describes him as having been transformed by love from Vulcan into Apelles.

"Connubialis amor de Mulcibre fecit Apellem."

He became a great painter, and is highly extolled by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

ting sun, the impression is indeed sublime, not exceeded by any scene of the kind which we had ever witnessed.

Entering by the front or western gate, we beheld a figure of our Saviour, the work of John Goethals, and one of his most successful efforts. The crucifix was cast out of the bronze statue of the tyrant Alva, who had nearly destroyed the city —a circumstance which gave rise to the just saying, which carries in it a retributive sting; "D'un grand scélerat on a fait un Christ." The porch of black marble gives a fine relief to the statues, one on each side the gate, representing the great apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. Passing into the southern aisle, we read the epitaph of Ambrosio Capello, bishop of Antwerp, executed by Verbruggen, in 1676; and saw another specimen of the curiously carved pulpits, and some portraits painted by Diepenbeck. The tabernacle representing the ark, of gilt brass, was designed by Verbruggen; the outside, richly decorated with *basso relievo,* of considerable merit. The high altar-piece, by G. Herreyns, represents the Saviour breaking bread, when he sat at table with Cleophas and other disciples, one of this artist's best performances. The Last Supper, painted on the window near the altar, is by Diepenbeck, and is worthy of notice. The descent from the Cross, in the south transept, the Visitation of the Virgin to Elizabeth, the Presentation in the Temple, by Rubens, all are admirably exe-

cuted. Of the latter, it has been remarked by Sir Joshua Reynolds,—"This picture is admirable indeed; the head of the priest more especially, which nothing can exceed; the expression, drawing, and coloring, are beyond all description, and as fresh as if the piece were just painted."

In speaking also of the "Descent from the Cross," it is observed, by the same excellent artist and critic; "the figure of Christ is one of the finest figures that ever was invented; the hanging of the head on his shoulder, and the falling of the body on one side, give such an appearance of the heaviness of death, that nothing can exceed it." He adds, that the three Marys have more grace than Rubens generally bestowed on female figures; and we were particularly struck with the beauty of one of these upon whose shoulder the foot of our Saviour seems to rest; the face appears absolutely radiant with that sweetly resigned and heavenly expression, which seems to be caught by those around her, and most of all by the young woman at her side, who is gazing up at Christ, with a look of intense anxiety. It indeed stands out like a miracle of the art. It has been observed, that the mass of light proceeds from the white sheet, which Sir Joshua remarked was a bold attempt, and which few but Rubens would have ventured on, for fear of hurting the color of the flesh. There are, however, circumstances connected with this picture, which render its compartments or auxiliary pictures even more

interesting. It is on record that the fraternity or corporation of *Arquebusiers,* transferred to Rubens a piece of ground on which he erected his mansion; and that the agreement was that he should paint for them a full-length portrait of their patron saint, St. Christopher, who, to judge from his portrait, was to be represented by a man of gigantic stature, carrying an infant on his shoulder across a river. The painter, it is thought, not at all relishing the subject, determined to select another, and not only produced for them the grand picture of "The Descent from the Cross," but added to it a couple of compartments or doors, on one of which he painted the subject of the "Purification of the Virgin Mary," and on the other, that of the "Visitation." Still it would seem that the Arquebusiers or Sharpshooters, had greater confidence in their own judgment, than in the good taste of the painter; while they accepted the beautiful examples of his own choice, they insisted, it is said, on having a portrait of their patron saint after their own fashion, though Rubens artfully contrived to throw it into the shade. On the reverse of the two doors are the two pictures stipulated for so stoutly by the fraternity—one exhibiting the giant in his proper person, and the other, an old hermit carrying a lantern, with the intention of trusting nothing to a miracle, and lighting the saint safely across the river.

If we are to believe also one of the many anec-

dotes relating to this great painter, his pupil Vandyke had his share in assisting to produce this singular, but finely executed work. It seems that during the absence of Rubens, while engaged upon it, the painting was accidentally thrown down, and received some serious injury. The students were alarmed,—Rubens would speedily return,—and in this exigency all turned their eyes to Vandyke, who at once set about restoring it to its former state. The parts that suffered were the cheek and chin of the Virgin, and the arm of the Magdalen. On his return, Rubens saw the change in a moment, and is said to have generously exclaimed, that he preferred his pupil's work to his own. There were few masters, indeed, who, by their noble and estimable qualities, excited the respect and attachment of those around him, more than the prince-painter of Antwerp; he was the least envied or maligned of any of his contemporaries; he never cringed to the great, nor, in the zenith of his good fortune, treated his equals or inferiors with want of respect, appearing always on the same terms of familiar equality. During his travels and his residence in different cities, he evinced the same equanimity, the same liberal disposition and conciliatory manners; and it was these qualities which raised him so high in the opinion and the confidence of the princes at whose courts he appeared, and led to his being selected by them as their special envoy in matters of the utmost delicacy and importance. He was con-

sulted and honored in the same manner by the States-general, the courts of Spain, England, and France; and, by his prudence and moderation, added to his engaging qualities, was considered to have been instrumental in bringing several secret or open quarrels, and difficult treaties, to a happy termination. His residence at the court of Charles I., and the numerous works with which he enriched his palaces, and the houses of the nobility, are matter of familiar history; as well as the disposal of the greater part of his collection of medals, pictures, and antiques, amassed during his travels, to the monarch's favorite, the duke of Buckingham. Rubens was twice married; and the portraits of Isabella Brand and of Helen Fourmont, with those of the children, more than once formed some of the happiest subjects of the artist's compositions. He lived to witness his eldest son chosen in his native city as secretary to the Privy Council; but most of the other members of his family were young at the period of his decease. For some time previously he was unable to undertake large works, but he did not cease to occupy his mind with the same studies and pursuits. At the express desire of the magistrates, he furnished designs for bridges and other public edifices; and on occasion of the visit of the cardinal, brother of Philip IV. of Spain, he prepared drawings of the triumphal arches and other decorations, engravings of which were made, and are still to be seen in a separate volume, but

they are the last that issued from his ingenious and well-stored mind. He died at the age of sixty-four, and within five years was followed by his friend and companion, Wildens, who usually put in the landscapes of his pictures, and resided with him.

We next proceeded to the noblest monument which an artist could raise to the memory of a friend; it is that to Moretus, the printer, over his epitaph, in the southern choir,—the picture of "the Resurrection." The subject, like the execution, may truly be said to adorn the tomb; it is an admirable production in point of composition and coloring; and the effect of terror in the countenances and attitudes of the soldiers partakes of the sublime. The Saviour is seen in the act of coming out of the sepulchre, arrayed in splendor—with all the spirit and power of life—and the figures are seen averting their faces, or thrown upon each other in their flight. The compartments of this fine work are decorated with a St. John and a St. Catharine. After examining some specimens of De Vos, De Quartemont, Pepyn, Van Baelen, and two old and curious paintings of an *Ecce Homo*, and a *Mater Dolorosa*, by an unknown artist, a St. Francis, by Murillo, &c., we came to the high altar of the choir, and the "Assumption of the Virgin," another of Rubens. In the act of ascending upon clouds, arrayed in light, her face appears radiant with the seraphic vision which opens before her; attended by a host of angels, supporting her robe

and mantle, agitated by a gentle breeze; others with palms in their hands, and two soaring to place a chaplet on her head. Below are seen the apostles, and three women round the deserted tomb placed in front of a sepulchre; and the attitudes and expression of the figures, the composition, and the entire grouping, attest this to be one of the best examples—an opinion in which all judges have agreed—of the peculiar style and character of this magnificent, but far from chaste and correct artist. It forms one of the few altar-pieces for which the space of sixteen days was devoted to its completion; the sum awarded was 1600 florins, 140*l.*, or 100 florins a day for a picture now estimated at between £5000 and £6000. An *alto-relievo* by Van Geel, a picture by Mathyssens, one by Van Bree, by Diepenbeck, Vander Linden, and Otto Venius, Rubens' master, did not long arrest our attention. One by Francken, however,—"The Doctors disputing in the Temple," giving the figures of Luther, Calvin, Erasmus, and other celebrated reformers, engaged us rather longer on account of its interesting portraits—painted in 1587—and the beautiful character of the heads, which were pronounced by Sir Joshua Reynolds, particularly the three men that are looking on one book, to be admirable characters,—the figures well drawn and well grouped, "though that of the Christ is but poor."

"The elevation of the Cross" in the north transept, is another of Rubens' master pieces. It is a work

of vast labor and varied composition, the effect of which is not so much that which satisfies a critical judgment, as producing an impression of grandeur and magnificence. This painting is highly extolled by Sir Joshua Reynolds, who observes that the subject gave an admirable opportunity for displaying the artist's various abilities to his countrymen; and that "it is certainly one of his best and most animated compositions." The invention of throwing the cross obliquely, from one corner of the picture to the other, is finely conceived; something in the manner of Tintoret; it gives a new and uncommon air to his subject, and we may justly add, that it is uncommonly beautiful. The doors form a continuation; the right has a group of women and children, on whose countenances terror is visibly impressed, presenting a fine contrast to the noble resignation beaming in those of the Virgin and of St. John, in the background; the other represents officers on horseback, followed by the two thieves in the hands of the executioners, seen nailing them to the cross.

"Rubens had the skill to adapt this subject in an eminent degree, to exhibit his grand art of composition; in his naked figures he had room for his knowledge of the anatomy of the human body; there are women of different ages to produce variety of expression; there are children and horsemen; and to make the range of variety complete, he has introduced a dog, in an animated attitude, and

admirably well painted. The horses are perfect in their kind; and this part of the work is by far the best in regard to coloring; the central picture, as well as that of the group of women, does not stand so high for color as every other excellence. I mean only to compare Rubens with himself: they might be thought excellent, even in this respect, were they the work of almost any other painter. The principal mass of light is on the Christ's body; but in order to enlarge it, and improve its shape, a strong light comes on the shoulder of the figure, with a bald head; the form of this shoulder is somewhat defective: it appears too round. Upon the whole, this picture must be considered as one of Rubens' principal works." * Among the accessory or auxiliary paintings, a St. Eloy—a grand apostolical figure—adorns one of the covers. This fine production, for which the artist received 2,600 florins, (£334,) is said to have been his first work on his return from Italy; but it bears intrinsic marks of having been the work of far maturer years. Its first exhibition at St. Walburge drew vast throngs, and elicited the most unbounded applause, similar to what took place at the exhibitions of Michael Angelo and Da Vinci, when they strove for pre-eminence before the people of Florence and of Italy. In the year 1627, Rubens retouched this favorite work, and always famous for his horses and dogs,

* Sir J. Reynolds' Discourses, &c.

introduced a dog of the Newfoundland kind in the right hand corner.

Napoleon, who was well aware of the grand *prestige* which attaches to magnificent collections of art, and how far it insensibly tends to strengthen a military government, drew spoils from every nation of the world; and his agents added also the "Descent of the Cross," to the dazzling treasures of the Louvre. It was restored with the peace in the year 1815.

The church of St. James, which contains the earthly relics of the great painter and his sons, was commenced in the year 1404, and finished in 1502, conducted by a council of magistrates, at the head of whom was Balthazar Robiano, senator of Antwerp. There is not much in its external appearance to impress the beholder; it is the interior, which, as regards intellectual associations the most absorbing, connected with the only lasting glory—the triumphs of the enduring mind, and its constructive principles as opposed to the devastating elements of tyranny and war,—gives rise to an indefinable feeling of awe and reverence for something like the immortality of genius, as you cross the threshold of the noblest of Antwerp's religious reliques. Splendid mausoleums, pure rich-wrought marbles, bold sculptures, and brilliant paintings, interspersed through eighteen chapels, and twenty-two altars,—present one magnificent *coup d'œil*, the

effect of which nothing can surpass. Even the choir, differing from other churches, is beautifully decorated with every attraction of art that can lend a charm to religious sanctity. The splendid confessionals which adorn the temple of Rubens; the beauty of the statues and paintings on all sides; the exquisite skill and beauty of the carvings; the lofty, subdued, and mellow light thrown over the tomb of the Saviour from the majestic casements—gave it a hold on the imagination and the feelings, which we experienced in no other place. This was remarked also by my Belgian friend—I may truly add "my guide, philosopher, and friend," who led me to the points of view most favorable to see the master-pieces,—no trivial advantage, and which economises your time and thoughts,—and pointed out to me every object most deserving attention, including the exquisite workmanship of Verbruggen, the glory of Antwerp, who has given to it the effect produced by the *chefs d'œuvres* of geniuses, by the singular skill and beauty of the carvings, which, like a vast frame, serve to give relief to the magic colors, and the enchanting forms of sculpture which surround them. For a great portion of its interior wealth and decorations, it is indebted to its miraculous good fortune, as it is regarded by pious catholics, in having escaped the ravages of war, and of fanatical violence; and it will be found proportionably enriched with contemporary works, and to contain

numerous beautiful marble statues, executed by great artists.*

The west front of the Flemish churches is in general the principal one, in accordance with the rules laid down in the Gothic architecture of the middle ages. The porch is sustained by marble columns richly decorated. This, as well as the fine carved and fretted work, was executed by Verbruggen, a man distinguished above all of his profession for skill and rapidity in his performances. On entering the southern aisle we saw the portrait of a dignitary—Van Den Bossche, painted in 1657, by Gobau; and opposite to it the epitaph of the painter Van Baelen, with a picture of the Resurrection of Christ. A portrait of the painter, and one of his wife, painted on marble by Vandyke, are placed over the monument, which bears the date of 1638. These are exceedingly interesting in every point of view, as well as some specimens by E. Quellyn, and some ancient pictures, said to be the productions of the great Memling, dated 1517, but the authority rests upon insufficient grounds.

The altar-piece by F. Floris, the Raphael of the Flemish school, as he has injudiciously been termed, is not without merit; but the martyrdom of two saints, upon the wall of the window, by Martin de Vos, is good. The paintings opposite represent the burgomaster Donckers, and his wife, both studied with

* The great bell, alone 12,500 pounds in weight, was cast in the year 1828.

the most exquisite degree of finish. They were painted by De Ryckere, in the manner of Holbein, in 1591. Here, too, we saw one of the frequent pulpits, so elaborately carved and ornamented, executed by Willemsens, and the great admiration of pious Catholics, who consider its preservation from the violence of Spaniards and Iconoclasts as altogether miraculous. The productions of Martin de Vos, some of them admirably executed, abound in this church; the "Woman taken in Adultery," is by the master of Rubens, and the statue of a saint by Van Hool, is well deserving notice. There is an *alto-relievo*,—the Erection of the Cross in a single stone, an elaborate piece, in which the figures are sculptured with great spirit; correct in design and daring in execution. It is by Vervoort, 1719. Scarcely inferior are the marble statues of St. John the Evangelist, and St. John the Baptist, by Malherbe. Everything here indeed exhibits the perfect state of the church decorations in those times; the communion table of white marble, after designs by A. Quellyn, who produced the figures of the children who support it, is admirably and skilfully constructed. Some painted glass by Vander Vecken, representing the history of Rodolph, from Augsburgh, is very fine. But we now approached the tomb of Rubens, a chapel behind the choir, wholly dedicated to the memory of this celebrated artist and his family. The altar appears surmounted with a white marble statue of the Virgin, by Ques-

noy, which was brought from Rome by Rubens himself. But these are lost in the interest excited by the grand historical painting, in which a likeness of the painter appears in the character of St. George; his father in that of St. Jerome; his first wife in that of Magdalen; and his second under that of Martha. His grandfather under the emblematical figure of time, is also introduced; and his son as an angel. The whole composition shows the great skill of the artist, and the care and study which he bestowed upon it. Of its splendid coloring, it is observed by Sir J. Reynolds, that "it is clear and bright as if the sun shone on it." And he pointedly adds, "that to a painter who wishes to become a colorist, or learn the art of producing a brilliant effect, this picture is as well worth studying as any in Antwerp."

The tomb is covered with a large marble slab, bearing Rubens' coat of arms, and a latin inscription, stating the great qualities of the artist, and the high honors to which he attained. We prefer, however, to give some passages from a critique by the learned Levesque, which admirably display the peculiar qualities and characteristics of this great man as a painter: "He painted history, portraits, landscapes, fruits, flowers, and animals, and excelled in every style: he likewise invented and executed with equal facility; he has been often seen making several sketches on the same subject, and different from each other;—he preferred the great

compositions, in which he succeeded admirably; he possessed not, it is true, like Raphael, that mild inspiration, which manifests itself by gracious and soft effects; but he was endowed with that internal fire which cannot be suppressed, and displays itself on every occasion by wonderful execution. It seemed that all his figures, all his groups, crowded, as it were, in order to exhibit themselves on the canvas; and that to invent he had only to use his own resources. His talents in drawing have been unjustly disputed; his designs were grand and easy; he possessed a profound knowledge of anatomy; but this science yielded to his impetuosity of conception, and his vivacity of execution;—in a word, the power of his art rises often to enchantment."

We proceed to notice only the chefs d'œuvres of the great artists, among which, "Christ expiring on the Cross," by Vandyke, is one of the best specimens of that master.* It was said to have been originally painted in compliment to the order of Dominicans. The artist has introduced their founder standing on the left, his arms extended, and his eyes raised towards the dying Saviour; while St. Rosalie, habited in the order of a Béguine nun, and wearing a crown of thorns on her head, is seen embracing the foot of the cross. Two angels appear above, beholding with wonder the mysterious

* Born at Antwerp in 1599; died in London in the year 1641. As the pupil of Rubens, and painter to Charles I. of England, he chalked out a new career, without coming into competition with his celebrated master.

event; and a third angel is seated at the foot of the cross, pointing with one hand to the Saviour. Sir Joshua Reynolds, and other judges, give to the whole composition the highest praise; it has been estimated at the value of 1,000 guineas. "The conduct of the light and shadow of this picture, is likewise worth the attention of a painter. To preserve the principal mass of light which is made by the body of Christ, of a beautiful shape, the head is kept in half shadow. The under garment of St. Dominick and the angel make the second mass; and the St. Catherine, head, handkerchief, and arm, the third." *

After having visited some private collections, and a number of public institutions, all on a splendid scale of art, though fallen from their original influence and utility; we returned to view the lofty and splendid tower of the cathedral, one of the finest Gothic monuments in the world. Of pyramidical form, the elegance, delicacy, and high finish of its workmanship, are truly admirable. Yet it is immensely strong; in all parts bound together by iron clamps; and is considered by the best judges a master-piece of skill, never yet surpassed. From its summit we enjoyed a magnificent view, both over the city and into the far distance, for which the peculiarly level character of the country, is in Belgium extremely favorable.

* Sir J. Reynolds.

CHAPTER XI.

Route from Antwerp to Brussels—Associations of a Road—Interesting Reminiscences—Adventures of a Painter Lover—Precautions of his Master—New Character of the Scenery—Phenomena of a Splendid Sunset—Situation and Advantages of Brussels—Use of a Friend at Court—The Park and the Boulevards—Memorials of Battle—A Circuit View of the City—Interior—Place d'Anvers—Portes de Namur and de Halle—Hôtel de Ville—Palace of Justice.

The canal from Antwerp to Malines, and the old diligences that used to occupy four hours in reaching Brussels, are no longer under requisition. For three francs and a half, the traveller now performs the distance, upwards of thirty miles, in less than an hour and a half by steam, and may repeat it three or four times a day, should he feel so inclined. The Porte de Malines, by which the road leaves Antwerp, traverses the village of Berchem, not long since the head quarters of the French general, Marshal Gerard, during the famous siege. We could still see, in the orchards and gardens, traces where the French first took up their ground, and opened the trenches by which they gradually

effected their approach to the citadel. In the immediate neighbourhood, we observed a number of pleasantly situated mansions, belonging to lords of the soil or wealthy merchants—the class from which the halls of representatives are chiefly supplied,—surrounded by neat but not spacious grounds; in which latter case they are generally dignified by the name of *chateaux*. As you proceed farther along the line, the *Rus in Urbe* begins to disappear, and substantial farms and red tiled cottages, with little gardens, neat and trimly dressed, and teeming with high culture, betray the secret of Belgium's agricultural fame, of her comparative plenty, her self-dependence and respect. Her prosperity is based—as a country's real prosperity ought to be—upon the land—the broad foundation of manufactures and commerce itself, without which national industry and ingenuity must be employed in vain. With a high state of cultivation and rich productive harvests, the impetus given to trade and commerce in all other branches, will be sure to follow; and the sole difficulty that remains, is to find, as in the case of Belgium, a fair and sufficient market to take off the products of its industry.

We passed Contich, a small place, having about four thousand inhabitants, whose chief employment is that of hat-making, and at the distance of two miles from Malines, is still observable the remains of a small rampart or fortification, which extends to both sides of the road. It is the scene of the last

struggle between the Belgians and the Dutch in 1831; in their contest for the possession of the narrow wooden bridge; when the former succeeded in driving the enemy from their position, and obliged them to retreat under the walls of Antwerp. But there are other associations yet more honorable and far more pleasant, connected with the road from the "city of great painters" to the capital of Belgium. There is scarcely a village or little hamlet by which you pass, that has not been the subject of some great artist's pencil, or received the name of a street or house from his residence; and the specimens of Teniers selected from the picturesque objects along this route, would almost form a collection, and are among the most pleasing and graphic, which his brilliant but faithful pencil produced. We are reminded also of the great pupil of Rubens, when for the last time he left his master's house or rather palace, where he held his school—a school of manners and fashion, as well as of art—where, distinguished above all by his manliness and wit, he received the princely visitors, displayed the treasures of his studio, conversed with lords and potentates, and was treated by the grand-minded Rubens less as a pupil than as a friend. It is evident from the portraits drawn of himself, that Vandyke was a very handsome man, and as he appears on horseback at the age of twenty-one, in the character of the saint militant,—a painting almost adored by his fellow-citizens—he has the

genuine air of a high-born and true cavalier. It was long the boasted treasure of the church of St. Martin, whose patron saint it represented, in the village of Salthem, near Brussels; and the regular and handsome features it displayed, are the same that belonged to Vandyke's mother, distinguished for her comeliness and noble looks. Rubens, though aware of his exalted genius, showed none of the petty jealousy displayed by the Italian masters. He engaged his admirable pupil to fill up many of his own designs, and more than one painting by the hand of the scholar, is supposed to have passed for, and still to maintain, the reputation of his master. To the surprise of every one there, that master, while he found so powerful a coadjutor and a friend, in the noble Vandyke, suddenly resolved upon his making the picturesque tour of Italy; and it was whispered there were other motives than those connected with art to wish his handsome scholar, however useful to his interests, at a greater distance. There seems little doubt that he did not behold the style of beauty peculiar to the second wife of Rubens, Helen Fourman, with indifference, and one of the most charming portraits he ever painted, or that was perhaps ever painted, of woman, was that of the young wife of his master. This he is known to have presented to Rubens, who, for whatever reason, soon afterwards offered to confer upon him the hand of his own daughter. What was his surprise, not unmingled probably with

a feeling of jealousy, worse than a professional kind, and marked disappointment, to find the alliance with a young heiress courteously declined; though, to judge by the likeness of her in the Schamp Gallery, she possessed other charms than those wealth could boast of.*

It might have been to obviate the world's surmises, and the disagreeable position in which they found themselves placed, that the visit to Italy was suggested; for the last as he was to become aware of it—as almost invariably is the case—Rubens saw it was the mother-in-law, not the daughter, who occupied the first place in the painter's affections. Venice was the place recommended by the master, who urged his immediate departure, while the other still lingered as if wholly absorbed in the completion of his Christ in the olive-garden. This also is the finest head of a man, for it is that of Vandyke himself, to which he ever put his hand; he bestowed upon it the greatest care, for it was intended as a companion to the beautiful Helen Fourman, which Rubens hung over the chimney-piece in his atelier,—and this, too, he presented to his master. There was no longer an excuse,—the time for Vandyke's departure was come,—and Rubens, who,

* There are few representatives of the family of Vandyke—and those on the female side—that now survive; one in the person of Madame Puqué, the wife of a young portrait painter, descended from Vandyke's daughter, who became allied to one of his most able and amiable pupils—the well-known Janssens.

in matters of liberal feeling, deserved to be called the Magnificent, selected from his stud a splendid Arab, sent to him by the king of Spain, richly caparisoned; and, mounted on this fine steed, the love-student took his departure, as he is represented in the sketch—the hand of Rubens resting on the neck of the horse, and the head of Vandyke bent down as if to catch his master's words, while his last looks are directed to a window, where you observe the half-concealed form of the charming Helen.

It was through the same gate, the Porte de Malines, and along the same route we traversed that the future great Vandyke then rode, till he reached the pretty village of Salthem, its Gothic church, and handsome peasantry. Even at that early time his fame had gone before him; the inhabitants came forth to meet him, and solicit the grand boon of a picture for the altar of their church. The young women and children appeared with chaplets of flowers; flowers were strewn in his path; and a chaplet of immortelles, in the words of his fair eulogist, was presented to him by the fairest of all —the miller's daughter. Vandyke was delighted at this simple testimony to his merits; he replaced the tribute on the fair brow of her who gave it; he gazed on it intently, for it was that which supplied him with the fine head and countenance of his Madonna. He had already a subject,—he complied with the entreaties of the villagers,—and produced

that exquisite painting of the miller's daughter—the Fornarina of the Flemish Raphael.

When tidings came to Rubens that his too-loving pupil, whom he had already believed on his way to Italy, was still dallying over another picture, he looked more and more serious, and began it is said to tremble for his honor, if not for the honor of his school. It is certain he lost no time in quietly commissioning an Italian friend, who was preparing to return to his own country, to persuade the dallying genius to accompany him, at least as far as Venice. The new picture was soon dispatched, and the gentleman succeeded perfectly in fulfilling Rubens' wishes.

In the school of splendid colors, with the models of Titian before him, the great Fleming in many respects surpassed the best of his predecessors, and made them subsidiary, as it were, to the completion of his full and masterly displays of art. From that period fortune and immortality seemed to vie with each other in weaving him garlands, like the maids of Salthem ; his reception in Italy ; at the court of Charles I. in England, and his alliance with a lady of noble blood,* with the honors conferred upon him,—for he was created a Knight of the Bath,—have the air of a romance, and show that he well

* Vandyke married lady Mary, the daughter of lord Ruthven ; made England his adopted country, and a monument was raised over his remains, in our cathedral of St. Paul's.

knew how to tread in the footsteps of his accomplished master.

Upon leaving Malines to the left, the railroad crosses the canal leading to Louvain, and between Malines and Vilvorde, near the village of Elewyt, is still seen the old chateau of Rubens, at Steen, of which he was seigneur, or lord of the manor. It is an ancient structure, surrounded by a moat, and now fast falling to decay. By going a little farther from the usual route, about two miles from Steen, we came to Teniers' house at Perck, called the Drey Toren, though only one of the towers now remains. We observed upon the folding doors a spread eagle, which tradition boldly ascribes to the artist's own design. In the adjacent church is also one of his paintings, and the tomb of his wife. Upon resuming our route, we next came to Vilvorde, a small place with 3000 inhabitants, but which has a noble church, that contains some very curiously wrought carvings in wood. It was at this place that Tindal, the first English translator of the scriptures, was burnt as a heretic in 1536. After quitting this place, the road continues in a parallel line along the grand canal to Brussels; the scenery becomes more wooded and varied, and is interspersed with a number of agreeable country seats, offering a strange contrast to the huge, sombre penitentiary which we had just left behind us on the opposite bank near Vilvorde. The view, on a nearer approach to Brussels, was of a different character to any we had

before seen; the monotonous level is relieved by gentle eminences and undulations of the ground in the distance—the noble city appears pleasantly situated on a gentle hill, and valley below, in the form of an amphitheatre, not strongly marked, but sufficiently so to produce a degree of variety. Soon, the palace of Laeken, the country residence of the king, attracts your attention on the right. In its external appearance it boasts nothing extraordinary, at least for a royal residence, having been built rather for security than for pleasure;—the stronghold of an Austrian governor of the Netherlands. It had a rapid succession of masters; and Napoleon figured among them, having resided here on his arrival in the country, and first planned, it is asserted, his grand and disastrous Russian campaign. The park, the flower gardens, and the entire grounds, are beautifully laid out, and disposed according to the best English rules of taste. The *allée verte* is exceeded by nothing of the kind we saw, till we reached the forest of Ardennes, and traversed the magnificent avenues of "old hereditary trees," in the vicinity of Verviers and Spa. The Porte Guillaume, now changed into Porte de Laeken, opens upon the avenue, which extends the entire way to Brussels; but it is humiliating to think that national enmity should have led to the destruction of the bas-relief which ornamented the gate, because it bore some allusion to the former king.

The evening we entered Brussels was beautiful and even magnificent, for it was a splendid sunset, and the entire city, and all surrounding objects, appeared bathed in a sea of purple light, seldom seen except in the south. It was this which gave us the impression that we had suddenly burst upon new scenery, together with the singular optical illusions, witnessed so frequently under the same circumstances, near Brussels, and producing so great a variety of novel and beautiful phenomena by the refraction of the sun's rays, and the play of light through the openings of the trees. It appeared, in fact, as if the entire woods were in one vast effulgence, and, by the rapid transit of the road, were thrown into a series of moving masses, emitting balls of fire, pouring down from the heights in endless succession, an effect which excited the curiosity and admiration of every passenger, even of those who had already beheld the singular spectacle, though not in the same vivid colors. To those only who have witnessed the splendors of a Neapolitan sunset resting on the city, and its fire illumined bay, could we hope to convey an adequate idea of the singular effects that can be thus naturally produced, and must defy the skill even of a Turner to seize and to depict. There was in this sunset a deeper radiance of the clear blue and crimson, with those green tints which purple sea and land, as they are seen in more southern skies, but seldom witnessed with extreme vividness in a more northern

latitude. As my Belgian companion briefly expressed it, and he was applauded by every one to the echo—"the phenomenon was unique and superb." It was such as the oldest passengers had not witnessed before.

We were now at Brussels;—so often seen and described, yet always new and agreeable both to the eye and the mind. We took a voiture in the lower town, and proceeding to the Place Royale, made it our first object to secure good apartments in the Hotel de l'Europe, as high ground as we could find, and the most pleasant from which to take a commanding view of this truly lordly, yet sufficiently democratic city, presenting a variety that must always be not a little exciting to the most fastidious palate.

The seat of government, and of the chambers, situated on the little river Senne, with a population of nearly 120,000, Brussels comprehends the upper and lower towns, the former on a gentle declivity, the most fashionable and salubrious; the latter in the low land, the most busy and industrious. The King's palace, the Halls of Representatives, the park, and the chief hotels, are all in the High town on the Place Royale; but for those who delight in the antique and picturesque, let them by all means stay where the railroad first deposits them, at least for a few weeks, and they will then, too, enjoy with double zest, the novelty and the variety of every kind to be met with in the New,—and its many

delightful environs. I was reminded by my friend, that the old town was once the court of the Brabant nobles: with its Grande Place, its Hotel de Ville, its palace of Charles V., and its fine old Gothic edifices. In some of these, as well as in its institutions and manners, Brussels may bear, on a small scale, some comparison with Paris. The opera—to say the least—is common to both; its cafés are conducted on a similar plan to those of the Palais Royal; there is a palace garden to vie in miniature with the Tuilleries; and Boulevards on Boulevards, are still fast spreading, like our own west end, to an indefinite point.

Brussels is not now so generally the resort of the English as before the late revolution. The immense colony of fashionable or economic settlers who then fled, seems never to have recovered the panic; and perhaps they weighed the comparative dulness to mere economists or frugal dwellers, against the cheapness of living; for, as a capital, it boasts few court-like attractions, general visitings, or common place amusements. With men of business, professional men, artists, and travellers, in pursuit of its real wealth and possessions, it is different; they will find ample matter to occupy their time agreeably; and they will find the English language so generally spoken, as to occasion no inconvenience from a want of the Flemish dialect, or genuine Paris French.

On our arrival in Brussels, our young Belgian

friend, whose society was half the pleasure of my excursion, pointed out to me everything worthy of observation; his name was the "open, Sesame," that gave admission to the most exclusive circles, where his mind and genius seemed to act like a spell upon the manners and characters of those around him. He introduced me to a number of friends in the Boulevards, in the two halls of representatives, and gave me a free passport at any hours to the various public institutions, from the museum to the French opera, and I had but

> "To listen to the voice that calls,
> To plays, to concerts, and to balls,"

had my taste, or principal objects of pursuit lain at all in that direction. What was more, he pointed my attention to some curious works connected with the early historical and traditionary records of Brussels, of the singular events which had signalized almost every street, and given a name to many, and to the edifices near them. This of itself afforded an infinite scope of novelty and variety to our inquiries, and I fortunately possessed the same happy resources, which give tenfold interest to every spot, with regard to Namur, Liege, and the pleasant romantic banks of the Meuse. With the same generous and unwearied kindness he proceeded to obtain letters for me from the Prussian embassy, in the view of my proceeding through Germany, and from some of his friends, introductions in France

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and Italy. We then took a stroll through the park, with the intention of calling on Dr. L., an able and successful physician, and not less popular and distinguished a writer; and on his friend Mr. M., in the Boulevards, the latter of whom had in his possession a beautiful specimen of Andrea Del Sarto, a Madonna and child, presented to that gentleman many years ago by the writer's father. It was now only the second time that I had been in Brussels, and the effect of revolutionary change was visible in the appearance of the park, as well as in many other public places, and institutions which had lost much of their exclusiveness. All public evidences, and vestiges of the former dynasty had been carefully erased—even names and allegorical representations were removed, and others, emblematic of national independence, studiously substituted. Sometimes this was carried to an amusing, if not a ludicrous excess, as at Paris, in similar circumstances, and occasioned a confusion of names rather puzzling to the great body of the people, and not very dissimilar to the predicament of the boy who went to inquire for "Die Game Cottage," when he was sent to the residence of "a learned Theban," who had dignified it with the name of the Greek digamma.

The park, within the precincts of the Haute Ville, and embracing the interior of a vast square, is laid out in a tasteful style, formed upon the old English manner of laying out public parks and pleasure

grounds; namely, in long avenues of trees, shady walks, and green spreading sward, profusely interspersed and enlivened by classical or allegorical statues — now too rarely seen in England. It serves as a general promenade, and a pleasant evening resort for the inhabitants, especially when exhilarated by the music of the royal band. It is then the more fashionable, as well as the youthful citizens of young Belgium belonging to the higher town may be seen adorning the left of the entrance from the Place Royale. Here, too, was the scene of some of the fiercest conflicts during the three days, and especially in the attack of Prince Frederick, part of whose troops forced the Belgian position, and played sad havoc with the trees and statues, by dint of round and grape; so that the Hotel de Bellevue, on which the insurgents retreated, was completely riddled with shot. As if it had been a second Waterloo, the good host made a point of collecting bullets and balls for the brief period the grand revolution should continue a nine days' wonder, and a Parisian subject of curiosity.

The environs and sides of this spacious and finely wooded enclosure, are chiefly formed of handsome edifices, continued on one side in a series of Boulevards; on the others are seen the royal palace, the palace of the Prince of Orange; the chambers, or hall of congress, including that of the senate. From the church of St. James, the rue Montagne de la Cour, and in particular from the Hotel de

Bellevue, the grand entrance to the park is seen to peculiar advantage, with the square, and the long terraced street, called the Royale, bounding its southern side. These, indeed, with all the surrounding edifices, comprehending a portion of the *Haute Ville*, are on a scale of princely magnificence, scarcely inferior to Paris itself; nor are the objects of curiosity in the park less calculated to promote the *ménus plaisirs* of the citizen of Brussels, than the former to gratify his taste and pride. There is a pleasing succession of variety in the distribution of the scenery, the objects, and the points of view, in the opening of glade, acclivity, or dell, and the disposition of statues, busts, and vases, at the spots best adapted to strike the eye. Numerous rows of trees are brought to terminate in a finely embowered centre, where, to give fresh illusion of forest beauty, you see no close to the surrounding vistas, and you may fancy yourself standing on the brink of an enchanted pool, as described by some German novelist; for here the young people can amuse themselves with watching the gold fishes playing in the clear waters. On the Sabbath, the chief day of recreation, it seems to swarm with the young and old of every rank, who enjoy the music of a fine military band, *al fresco*, walking in groups, or reposing on the numerous seats near the central clump whence the notes issue, the performers being themselves invisible, which gives a kind of illusion to the scene.

But it is the "Promenade du Boulevard," which is pronounced *par excellence*, the Hyde Park of Brussels; though in point of brilliancy of equipages, and of *réunions*, it is like the park, no longer what it once was. On a fine summer's evening, it presents an elegant and richly animated scene. The new boulevards also, extending from La Porte du Rivage to that of Halle, form a beautiful, or rather magnificent, walk of more than four miles, delightfully shaded by elm and linden trees, offering one continued variety to the admirer of rural and picturesque scenery. Leaving the new gate, we came to the fine public garden called "le chêne vert," through an avenue of handsome aristocratic trees, where the old cross-bow men were of old accustomed to try their skill; and in a spacious embowered alley to the right, lay the grand bason of Charleroi. Opposite the boulevards, on the other side, we suddenly caught a glimpse of the little rural palace called le Point-de-vue, from which commences the noble avenue which conducted us to the bridge of Lacken. It was for the preservation of this delicious walk, that the ladies of Brussels so urgently petitioned Marshal Saxe, when, in 1746, he opened his fire against the gate of Schaerbeck, and the courteous commander was sufficiently gallant to turn a favorable ear to the round robin presented by so fair a deputation. From all that can now be seen, it was well deserving all their efforts to save the chief grace and glory of

their holidays; and the thousand pretty excursions with their families, to enjoy the sweet cool air, and numberless pleasant spots associated with early pleasures, which give so great a zest to little expeditions—such as the environs of Brussels affords. It is in these cool and delightful retreats also, that the royal Leopold and his consort take their pleasant little drives, laying aside every semblance of state, either by themselves, or accompanied only by a few select friends—a simplicity of taste and feeling, which, together with their unaffected manners, and their respect for the national institutions, tends to conciliate the good will and the confidence of the people. The "Champ d'Asile," a rural little paradise, embowered in flowers, in which the queen takes much delight, its choice and tasteful decorations, and its picturesque views, offer a double zest to these excursions, and render Brussels any thing but a dull residence to the artist and the amateur.

Re-entering the city, still in the direction of the boulevards, we come to the "Porte d'Anvers;" a portico, with its triumphal arch and three entrances. The centre one is adorned with two Corinthian columns, supporting an elegant frame-work, on which was represented, in bas-relief, the chief magistrate of the city, offering the keys of the town to William I.; but this, too, shared the fate of all other public memorials of the past reign. The place d'Anvers, the porte de Schaerbeck, from which

the eye stretches over a picturesque valley, and the high roads leading to Ninove, Ghent, and Jette, and the hospice called Pacheco, for support of the wives and daughters of deceased officers who fell in the revolution, and the new hospital, brought us towards the gate of Louvain, along a continuation of the boulevard, lined with magnificent edifices, till we reached the new observatory. This is an interesting building, of which the principal façade is very pleasing and admirably placed, with a southern aspect. Near here we passed the Place des Barricades, erected from designs by Roget, and which opens upon four noble streets. At one of the angles of the boulevards is the market for the sale of horses, held twice in the year; and here again we obtained a prospect of the surrounding country, even more extensive than from the porte de Schaerbeck. We found that of Louvain more striking than any we had yet passed; it consists of two octagonal pavilions, with arches united by an iron frame-work. From this place to the porte de Namur, the boulevard is extremely beautiful, and on the side of the town commands a fine prospect over gardens and grounds richly cultivated; on that of the country the prospect extends as far as the ponds of Josset en Noode, and the champaign tract beyond the cemetery of St. Gudule, and the Linden-Borch. Pursuing our external view, we passed by the pretty little palace of the Prince of Orange, and by the porte de Namur, till we reached

le boulevart de Waterloo, which extends in a direct line till we reach the porte de Halle, along another range of new and beautiful edifices, where a fresh prospect opens over the faubourgs de St. Gilles, to the commencement of the bois de Forét. This is the spot to behold a fine sunset, commanding as it does the whole horizon, often lit up with a splendor which diffuses itself far over town and tower, and painting with richer hues the fertile plains of Brabant and Flanders.

The Porte de Halle was constructed in 1381; but some centuries afterwards it was transferred with the surrounding buildings to the purposes of a dungeon, by the execrable Alba, who selected for its occupation the most illustrious victims. In modern days it has been appropriated as a depository for the general archives of the city. Proceeding farther, we soon found ourselves upon the ancient ramparts of Brussels—a site not so often visited—and whence other prospects disclose themselves over these varied and delightful environs. Next from the porte d'Anderlecht, the city itself, as on a map, lay stretched below us in one vast and splendid amphitheatre, half encircling lofty towers, churches, and palaces, streets, parks, and gardens, forming a magnificent and varied foreground to the still more enchanting distance. Fine champaign and wooded views, Soignies, and green vistas of the "allée verte," presented under different points at every step, as novel and picturesque a *coup d'œil* as the

heart of a Flemish painter could desire, or his eye feast upon. If we except, indeed, the banks of the Meuse, there is no scenery in Belgium comparable to part of the environs round the capital, so far, at least, as regards variety, and striking or pretty effects. We could not help picturing to ourselves, what was the aspect of the same scenes in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when the neighbouring forest overshadowed the very walls; when woods, like the Ardennes, stretched their dark lines over the southern districts; and religious festivals, the gay tournament, ordeals of battle, and knightly pilgrimages to the Holy Land; the wild hunting, or the romantic love scene, were meditated or commemorated within their lofty precincts; when the lordly castle, or secluded monastery, rose over each pleasant site, and usurped the fair and far domain; both the glory and the beauty of the land.

We had completed our circuit of the "portes de ville," and the "boulevards," so as to view the city and its environs from every commanding point; and we now bent our steps into the interior along the old "Rampart des moines," and its famous monastery by the church of St. Gery, to the Grande Place, when we came to the Town Hall, one of the most spacious and magnificent edifices in Brussels. It is also surrounded by several antique-looking buildings, which display their Spanish character and origin. The exterior aspect of the Hôtel de Ville is striking and imposing; it presents a fine

example of the Gothic Lombard style of architecture, and of the splendid municipal palaces which distinguished Belgium during the middle ages. The majestic tower in the same style, with open Gothic work to the summit, was completed in 1441, by the celebrated Van Ruysbroeck, though it has since been frequently repaired. In point of strength and lightness, as well as elegance, it is not surpassed by anything of the kind; it is 364 feet in height, and supports a colossal statue of the patron saint, which serves as a weathercock. It has been observed that this fine tower is not placed in the centre of the edifice, and that the artist destroyed himself on detecting this fault; an absurd story; for there is every reason to conclude that originally it was only half its present length, that the tower stood at one end, and that the addition made, projecting into the adjacent street, produced this apparent irregularity. The view from the summit extends over Soignies, as far as Waterloo; the colossal lion on the mound is distinctly visible. The interior court is adorned with fountains flowing from white marble figures of sea deities resting on their urns; and the great Gothic hall brings to mind the exploits of Charles V., who there abdicated state power in favor of his son Philip II. There is an antique sombre air, which, with the deserted state of the other apartments, decorated with faded tapestry, and the ghostly-looking portraits of the dukes of Burgundy, kings of Spain, and Austrian dames and princes,

serve to exemplify the wretched vanity of human power and wealth, except so far as they are directed to the support of justice, truth, and virtue. The ground floor is occupied by civic officers. On the right, after entering the great archway, is the police office; in the market place in front, the counts Egmont and de Horne were beheaded; they spent the preceding night in the old house opposite, the Maison du Roi, and ancient Hôtel de Ville. It was restored by the Infanta Isabella, in 1625, out of compliment to Notre Dame de la Paix, for having kindly delivered Brussels from the plague, war, and famine; and there is a half effaced inscription to this effect; she had done better, perhaps, to have delivered them from the scourge of the Spanish despot, and his myrmidons.

The Palace of Justice, formerly the convent of the Jesuits, which was suppressed by Maria Teresa in 1773, and their church as recently as 1812, received its present form in 1823, as would appear from an inscription lately effaced, and which bore the name of the king of the Netherlands William I. It is remarkable as an imitation of the church of Ste. Marie-la-Rotonde, at Rome, the ancient temple of Agrippina. The interior was badly laid out; inconvenient, and in a neglected state; but it has more recently been considerably restored and improved.

The Hôtel de la Monnaie, on the place of that name, opposite the Theatre Royal, was founded as

early as 1291. John I., duke of Brabant, was the sovereign who here first struck golden coins, which he called his Lions d'or, no inappropriate name to signify their power, and their claws may aptly enough be termed the sinews of war, and not only of war. The French government interrupted the labors of the mint, and turned the hotel into a Bourse, which has been subsequently, however, held in the vestibule of a building belonging to it.

The Theatre Royal in the same "Place," is an enormous and heavy-looking edifice constructed about twenty years ago; it opened with an opera of Gretry, *la Caravane,* to an overwhelming house. The façade is formed of eight Ionic columns; and it has a magnificent gallery of arcades, which extends entirely round it. The gas lights are quite insufficient to illumine the vast space; and it is only when glowing with splendid lustres of wax tapers over the front boxes, where the fashionable dress of Brussels displays itself, that it loses the sombre impression which its heavy proportions and massiveness inspire. The corps des artistes, and du Ballet, is very considerable, and tolerably supported; and those of the grand and of the comic opera we considered far superior to the others, especially in the performances of the Belgian and the German master pieces, the compositions of which are superb. There is another "troupe de Vaudeville;" but the support received from the public is not such as to sustain its character without

a vote from the civil list. Its management is now in the hands of a company whose funds are augmented by the royal family, by means of three of the leading banks, and by shareholders, as in our own theatres. Its representations are every day, including Sunday; but in the Theatre du Parc they are only twice in the week, on the Saturday and *mirabile dictu,* for the supporters of Protestant and dissenting creeds, on the Sunday also.

CHAPTER XII.

Origin and Historical Associations—St. Gudule—Charlemagne—Flemish Knights—Modern History—Philip II.—Crusade—Association of Des Gueux—Regency of Princess Margaret—Historical Sketch—Napoleon—St. Gudule—Architecture—Notre Dame—Museum—Public Edifices, &c.

Few cities are so interesting as Brussels, with regard to historical associations and stirring events. Its origin, as recorded in the old legends, is ascribed to St. Gery, who built a chapel in the sixth century, in a little island, formed by two streams of the Senne, still known by the name of its founder, who was also bishop of Cambray and Arras. It is not till the tenth century we hear of Brussels as a town of importance, from which the emperor Otho II. dated his despatches, as Napoleon hoped to do in more recent times. Charles, son of Louis Outremer, chose it for the site of a palace; and transferred to the chapel of St. Gery, the body of St. Gudule, deposited in the time of Charlemagne, in the mŏnastery de Moorsel; and she thus became

the grand patroness of the city. Its dominion was then dignified only by the name of *Compté;* its palace was a castle, and Vilvorde and Tervueren were the limits of its domain. Balderic, count of Louvain and Brussels, surrounded the castle with a wall having seven gates, traces of which are yet remaining; a second was constructed in 1380, observing the same circuit as nearly as possible, as the present line of boulevards.

In 1213, Brussels was besieged and taken by Ferrand, count of Flanders, and Salisbury, brother of the king of England, who wished to force Henry I., duke of Brabant, to abandon the alliance of France. Under the powerful dukes of Burgundy, the manufactories of arms, cloth, tapestry, and lace, rapidly added to its riches. The house of Austria, which succeeded, witnessed the further development of its resources, till the reign of Charles V. when, in common with the Low countries, it rose to its highest pitch of splendor.

The Flemish knights were early famed for their chivalry, and at the head of the Brabanters the famous Henry D'Assche joined the expedition to the Holy Land. Long supposed to be among those who were lost, his return was celebrated with the utmost pomp and rejoicing, and the anniversary of the 19th of January is still observed as a festival, called the *Vrouwkens Avond,* to honor the feats of arms, and the escape of their compatriots, as they had formerly been celebrated in the ducal palace

at Brussels, to the high-sounding strains of the court minstrels, surrounded by the beauty and chivalry of the land.

Under Philip II., palaces with their splendid decorations, and churches with their treasures of art, and even public institutions, became the prey of fanatic multitudes, driven mad by oppression, who violated sanctuaries, defaced monuments, and threw off all respect for the ceremonies of divine worship. The establishment of the inquisition served only to exasperate the public mind. The nobles entered into a compact, which they signed in Ghent, 8th of November, 1576, binding themselves to oppose the unjust decrees of the administration, while at the same time they took an oath, declaring that their sole object was the glory of the Catholic faith, and the preservation of their inalienable privileges. They attended at Brussels to the number of 250, for the purpose of presenting their petition; they were received by Philip's sister the regent Margaret, attended by her minister Berlaymont, who was heard to apply to the petitioners the expression of *des gueux,* a term which the confederates adopted: it afterwards became the rallying cry of the Protestants and Calvinists; and for their device they took a porringer and a wallet. Soon the *Gueux des Bois* began to walk their rounds; they annoyed the Spaniards in every direction; drew them into their toils, and attacked their Flemish partisans, while others took to the sea. The *Gueux de*

Mer became intrepid adventurers, and the models of the military marine, so powerful an arm in the service. They were no longer mendicants.

Margaret was unwilling to return any answer to the petitioners without the direction of the tyrant Philip. She instantly sent off a messenger, and attempted to quit Brussels, but the gates were closed. The reply of her fanatic brother was the arrival of the duke of Alva, at the head of an army, "to support the royal authority and to cause the Catholic religion to be respected." All who could make their escape, comprehending thousands of the industrious, as well as higher classes, betook themselves to England and Germany; and a system of persecution was commenced by the ferocious Alva, which ceased not till it reached the heads of the best and greatest, who still stood by their country.

Yet with the deaths of counts Egmont and De Horne, and the flight of the prince of Orange, the resistance of the people was unsubdued, and the baffled Philip was at length compelled to recal his sanguinary governor, and replace him by Louis de Requesens, a man of comparative prudence and moderation. He died before the ensuing year, and was succeeded by the celebrated Don John of Austria, natural brother of Charles V.; and under him and the archduke Mathias, who succeeded him as governor, the country felt a short respite, during which the authority of the prince of Orange re-

sumed its influence, and crowds of Protestants resorted to Brussels, and reopened their public harangues. On the 26th of July the deposition of Philip was publicly announced, on the ground of his having violated the privileges of the nation. In 1584, the prince of Parma took up a position at Assche, with the design of besieging Brussels; he was compelled to turn the siege into a blockade, which at length succeeded, and the Spaniards regained possession of the city. In 1598, having lavished the treasures of a new world, and sacrificed his subjects, in support of tyranny and superstition, Philip dissolved the connexion between the countries, and the more auspicious reign of Albert and Isabella, commenced. They devoted themselves, with laudable zeal, to repair the disasters caused by preceding rulers; they fostered science and the arts, and were the first of the Spanish and Austrian line, to revive useful institutions; their deaths were deplored, and their memories justly cherished. When Mary de' Medici was exiled by the intrigues of Richelieu, she came to claim an asylum from the hospitality of the court of Brussels; and Charles, duke of Lorraine, driven from his own dominions in 1649, took refuge in the same capital—the generous England of the age, that opened her arms to the unfortunate, of whatever party. The eccentric Christina, of Sweden, upon her abdication, came first to Brussels, and it was there, in 1564, that she abjured the Lutheran, and embraced the faith of

the Catholics. Two years afterwards Charles II. claimed the protection of the same friendly city, and it may safely be averred, that few places in Europe have been graced with the presence of so great a throng of illustrious exiles.

The death of Charles II. of Spain in 1700, gave rise to the long disastrous war of the succession; French troops occupied the city of Brussels, 21st of February, 1701, and the year following, Philip V. received the title of duke of Brabant. But at the peace of Utrecht, Brussels and the Low countries were again restored to the dominion of the house of Austria.

The emperor Charles VI. assumed the sovereignty on the 11th of October, 1717,—the same year that the self-taught czar, Peter the Great, came on his tour of inquiry to the Belgian capital. Under Maria Theresa, who patronised great public works, Brussels became the entrepôt of foreign merchandise, between England, France, and the rest of Europe, rapidly increasing in wealth and political importance.

On the peace of Aix la Chapelle, duke Charles of Lorraine made his public entry, 28th of April, 1749; his government was beneficent, gaining for him the rare title of the Good, during the exercise of his authority—in the name of Maria Theresa—for a space of thirty-six years.

Joseph II., her successor, arrived in Brussels the 22nd of June, 1781. It was the favorite object of

this potentate, to introduce into his Belgic provinces, the laws already established in his other dominions; but the states of Brabant declared themselves against what they termed an innovation; they insisted upon the maintenance of the laws and privileges of their country, rose in arms, and declared that he had forfeited all titles to his sovereign authority in the Low countries. For some period a provisional government was continued in the hands of the council of the newly-risen states.

Leopold, who was selected to succeed Joseph in 1791, swore to maintain the charter of the Brabanters, and took possession of his new dominions. He was succeeded the ensuing year by Francis II., who had scarcely assumed the reins of government, when republican France deprived him of his new honors. The battle of Jemmappe opened the gates of Brussels to Dumouriez, on the 14th of November; Belgium became a province of France, and Brussels only the *chef-lieu* of the department of the Dyle.

Upon the 21st of July, 1803, Napoleon, as first consul, made his public entry into Brussels, and the authorities crowded to render him the homage extorted by genius and good fortune in its young and brilliant career. Subsequent events, which terminated in the battle of Waterloo; the accession of the Orange dynasty to the sovereignty of Belgium; the revolution; and the election, by a na-

tional congress, of prince Leopold of Saxe Cobourg, the 4th of June, 1831, are familiar to all readers. The proverbial prudence, integrity, and good fortune of his family, independent of his high personal qualities, and his acknowledged talent, offered the best guarantee which a prince can give, for a sovereignty, presented by a free people, and resting upon wise and useful institutions.

Upon our return through La Basse Ville, we took in our way the grand cathedral of St. Gudule, a fine specimen of the old Gothic. Lofty and majestic, its site upon the declivity of a hill, the antique Molenberg, gives it a striking and imposing aspect. Balderic, count of Louvain, appears to have been its earliest founder, about the year 1010; it was dedicated to St. Michael, but subsequently the patroness saint Gudule shared this honor with him; and it is still known by the united names of saints Michael and Gudule. Gerard, bishop of Cambray, consecrated it, and by the liberality of Balderic II., and the emperor Henry III., was enabled to form a chapter of twelve monks. Henry I., duke of Brabant, in 1202, confirmed the donations of his ancestors, and greatly enriched its possessions; it was rebuilt in 1226, and Philip the Good held in it the first chapter of the order of the Fleece of Gold; and in 1516, Charles V. also held the eighteenth chapter of the same order, within its spacious precincts.

This noble edifice, like the St. Peter's at Rome,

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is built in the form of a cross; the grand portal is considerably elevated, to supply the inequality of the ground; it is surmounted by two square towers of equal size, but which were never carried so high as originally designed. The character of the interior architecture is equally simple and grand; the pillars which support the ceiling are of an enormous size, free from every kind of factitious ornament; but ennobled by colossal statues, representing the Saviour, the Virgin, and the Apostles. They are not, however, in the best taste, except that of the Virgin, by Quellyn; and a few of very superior execution by the well-known Duquesnoy. The high altar, bearing the date of 1723, was constructed from the designs of Donkers; on each side of the sanctuary we observed two fine statues, by Laurent Delvaux, transferred hither from the old abbey of Afflighem. The tabernacle contains a curious piece of mechanism, by means of which the holy sacrament appears at the will of the priest who administers it. Upon the left is the grand mausoleum, raised by the archduke Albert, in honor of John II., duke of Brabant, and his consort, Margaret of England, bearing the respective dates of 1312 and 1318. The monument is of black marble, surmounted by a figure of a brazen lion, which is said to weigh upwards of 6000lbs. Nearly opposite we noticed the monument of the archduke Ernest, who died in Brussels in 1595. The figure is clothed in its cuirass couchant, the shoulder sup-

ported on a cushion; the sword by its side, the helmet at the feet, and the device inscribed,—*Soli Deo gloria.* Upon particular days of festival, the rich tapestry hangings are exhibited in the choir, representing the history of the celebrated miracle of the sacrament, or the miraculous wafers, said to have been saved from the hands of a sacrilegious Jew. He had stolen them, runs the tradition, from the altar, and to show his contempt for the Christian religion, he summoned his brethren to meet in the synagogue, for the celebration of their profane and blasphemous rites. The day chosen was Good Friday, and, after showing their contempt for the holy emblems by every means in their power, they finally struck their knives into the wafers, which spouted blood, and threw the blasphemers senseless upon the ground. The tidings soon flew through the city—the perpetrators were denounced, and as speedily put to death by the infliction of the most cruel torments.

To this day the wondrous triumph of the faith is commemorated, on the second Sunday in the month of July, by a solemn procession of the clergy, with an exhibition of the identical wafers; and a book is still handed to the spectators, containing a full and particular history.

The side chapel of St. Sacrement was likewise erected in commemoration of the same event. The interior is rich and splendid, spacious and lofty,—the four windows in particular, so richly wrought

and decorated, give it a deep mellow light, in unison with the antique beauty and character of the architecture. The glass thus magnificently painted was by the hand of Roget. Here, too, on the right of the altar, we saw the vault which contains the ashes of the archduke Albert, and the Infanta Isabella, surmounted with a noble monument of white marble, the figures of both clothed with a religious habit; but there is little in the style and character of the other monuments deserving particular mention.

In the chapel of Notre Dame we saw the statue of Frederick de Merode, who was killed in 1830, surrounded by the brave Belgian volunteers. He is represented in the old national costume, as old as the Romans, the well-known *blouse*, just when he is mortally wounded, and in the act of trying to raise his weapon with his right hand. "Here," observed my friend, "you see the work of an artist of whom Belgium has reason to be proud, as she is of him whom he has immortalised;—what is your opinion?" "That M. Geefs," was my reply, "has triumphed by the inspiration of his art rather than by skill over the difficulties which presented themselves, and not the least that of clothing his figure in the modern dress of the people. He has given the whole a nobleness and dignity becoming the place, the subject, and the character of the monument—and the event." "You are right," was the Belgian's reply, "he soars above the com-

mon-place; he can touch nothing he does not ennoble or adorn; but the paintings here are scarcely worth observation."

As an object of curiosity, showing the perfection to which the art of carving in wood was carried by the old Flemings, few specimens could be cited better worth examination, than the antique pulpit of St. Gudule. The design is wholly novel and original; it was the work of Henry Verbruggen, of Antwerp, dating the year 1699, and executed for the Jesuits of Louvain. It was presented to the church which it now adorns, by the empress Maria Theresa, in 1776; the subject consists of Adam and Eve, driven by an angel from their terrestrial paradise; on the left, Death is seen in pursuit of them, while the figure of the Virgin above them, is in the act of crushing the head of the serpent with a cross which she holds in her hand; on the two sides are seen two staircases, of which the balustrades are formed of trunks of trees, on which are the figures of a variety of animals. The workmanship is extremely elaborate, and executed with a care, yet spirit and freedom of hand, rarely seen in works of the kind, though it was remarked by my Belgian critic, that the artist had displayed more imaginative power and invention than good taste. The choir is only separated from the nave by a simple gallery, which adds much to its imposing appearance.

On quitting this noble edifice by the great por-

tal, we came on the right to the foundling hospital, erected by Walkenaers, a citizen of Brussels; on the left, to the hospital of St. Gertrude, where the aged of both sexes are supported by voluntary offerings from the public institutions of the city, each receiving sixty centimes, or sixpence,—a plan of supporting the poor very generally adopted throughout Belgium, where there are no poor rates,—as well as by the collection for debtors and unfortunate prisoners, at public entertainments, and at the tables d'hote.

The churches of Brussels, though not comparable to those of Antwerp, in regard to treasures of art, are deserving the attention of the stranger; and we proceeded to the church de la Chapelle, founded in 1140; a fine Gothic specimen, and divided into three naves, the principal, like that of St. Gudule, ornamented with statues by Duquesnoy and Faydherbe. The high altar is of variegated marble, executed after designs by Rubens, who painted for it an Assumption, of which the present is only a feeble copy. The one which represents Jesus appearing to the Magdalen, is one of the *chefs d'œuvre* of G. de Crayer. Other monuments deserve attention, especially those raised to the house of Spinola and of De Croi; the highly-wrought pulpit by Plumiers, represents the prophet Elias concealed under a rock, to avoid the rage of Jezebel, and the angel bringing him his food.

Our next visit was to the new hospital for aged

men, still attended by a few Béguines who survived the dissolution of their Brussels community. The church of the Béguinage was not commenced till the year 1657, and was finished within three years of that period. It is a fine edifice, and formerly contained some good paintings, of which a few of the best specimens went to enrich the Musée at Paris. In St. Catherine, however, which has nothing remarkable in point of architecture, we saw an excellent picture by Crayer; it decorates the high altar; and in the choir to the right is a good specimen of Janssens, representing a duke of Cleves cured by the intercession of St. Vincent; on the left, a Christ in the tomb, by Otto Venius.

Leaving the churches, we next directed our steps to the Museum, in the old palace of the prince of Orange, and the residence of the governors of the Low countries. It is now the Palais des Beaux Arts; and a portion of the buildings erected on the site of the old botanic garden, is appropriated to the exhibition of the national products of industry, which takes place once in every four years. The Picture Gallery contains several specimens which have been erroneously attributed to Rubens, being the works of his pupils, and so inferior to those at Antwerp, and at many other places, as scarcely to deserve notice. The strictures of Sir J. Reynolds were scarcely called for, on works from which M. Passevant and the best amateur critics, seem to agree in relieving the reputation of a great painter, whose

want of chaste and correct design, could alone have authorised the supposition, that the Adoration of the Magi, Christ falling under the Cross, the Martyrdom of St. Stephen, and Christ armed with thunder to destroy the World, could have emanated from a mind and judgment like those of Rubens. Only in the Assumption of the Virgin could we trace some resemblance in the apostles and the two women, and the angels, here with the sky in perfect harmony; and the distribution of the lights partake of his beauty of coloring. The entire collection, indeed, contains but few tolerable specimens of the Flemish masters; * and it is to be regretted, that some of the most valuable productions, by the best native artists, were destroyed in the horrible bombardment of Brussels, by marshal Villeroy, in August, 1695. Besides thousands of houses, and fourteen churches, with their profuse wealth of art, the finest works of Rubens and Vandyke shared the common calamity of the devoted city. The Museum of Natural History, is, perhaps, the most complete in Belgium. It is rich in specimens from the Dutch colonies. The collection of mineralogy is also enriched with the Russian cabinet, presented by the princess of Orange. Add to these a com-

* The collection of paintings and natural history, are open on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday; but a stranger will gain admittance on any day or at any hour, by a small fee to the porter. The expense is exceedingly trivial compared with these things in England.

plete series of the volcanic productions of Vesuvius, and the beautiful fossil specimens from Maestricht.

The library, divided into two departments, contains 150,000 volumes, and not less than 15,000 manuscripts and missals; the treasures of centuries amassed by the dukes of Burgundy. Not a few are illuminated and enriched with precious miniatures, showing an almost unfaded brilliancy of colors, by the best pupils of Van Eyck.* The chronicle of Hainault consists of seven folios, illuminated by Hemaling in an exquisite style. The greater portion of these valuable relics of a mighty age were collected by the accomplished Marguerite of Austria (properly of Burgundy), whose poetical genius we have already eulogized; and as we stood in the centre of these sacred precincts, the noble antique air, the mellow light of the stained windows, the portraits of the old Burgundian dukes on the walls, the splendid bindings and gold clasps, made us feel as if we had shaken off the dust of the present times, and were transported into a world of the past.

* Open every day except Sunday and Wednesday.

CHAPTER XIII.

Residence at Brussels—True and False Fame—The Ducal Library—Public Spirit of Napoleon—Albums—Black and Crimson Damask—Annals of Love—Dances à la Mode—Palaces—Chambers—Traits—Parties—Princess of Orange—Ball Room, &c.—Curiosities.

More than once we had stolen from the festive board, and the invitations of courteous Brussels' friends; for if there be a truly refined and hospitable city, a good-natured and pleasant people, who will readily go out of their way to oblige you, they are to be found here and at Liége. "How long would you pore over this old ducal library?" inquired my humorous friend, "quousque tandem, Catalina? you for ever refuse the civic dinner and the rural fête, to indulge a taste for these old Belgic chronicles and legends, in abundance enough to bury you under a pile of the sly monks' tales, like your poor Clarence in a butt of his own Malmsey. You may fight like Hector in the

shade, if you please; but I, like Ajax, only beseech the gods that they will grant me sun enough that I may see, not my enemies, but my friends; and accept as many challenges as possible to meet in regular battle array within the precincts—of the social halls.

"Now lest you should think yourself into a ducal statue, you must shake this dust off your mind; we have yet to see the halls and palaces, and having supplied yourself with lies and legends, I will tell you all the historical and the true that appertains to this glorious receptacle of ages past. The names of Philip the Good and Aubert, its head director and conservator, are essentially connected with its foundation and future prosperity: Bruges supplied it with splendid parchments,—Greece and Italy with rare MSS., and Flanders herself with beautiful illuminated copies, and scarce editions in every department of learning. Philip had the whole Cyropædia transcribed for the use of his son Charles the Bold; and that very copy you now see was presented to the library by the present queen of the Belgians. It was the young duke's companion in his travels and campaigns, and at the battle of Nancy, 1477, where he was killed, it was lost, by his rashness and extravagance, like so many other noble specimens laboriously obtained. His grandson, Philip le Beau, the brother of your favorite Margaret of Austria, was worthy of such a sister and of the sceptre he swayed; indeed they

may be said to have reigned together; to have made the people, and its glory in letters, arts, and prosperity, the object of their lives; and how keenly she regretted the loss of so great a coadjutor—to say nothing of his amiable temper and handsome looks, that gained him the title of *Le Beau*—her own effusions testify. How wofully did Belgium suffer by his early decease, when insanity, tyranny, and superstition, in the shape of a Philip II. and an Alva, came like a disastrous eclipse, and plunged the rising hopes and fortunes of the Low countries, and of Europe, in the blackest night! How lamentable the contrast! And here you have the MS. poems of that amiable and great princess, and the specimens with which she enriched her brother's library. Maria, queen of Hungary, sister of Charles V., presented this splendid missal of Matthias Corvinus, illuminated in Italy, and one of the finest manuscripts known in Europe. By this the Brabant dukes took oath to keep inviolate the *Joyeuse Entrée*, part of the political rights of this province. You see where the Judas kiss has obliterated the picture, almost as completely as the consciences of the princely betrayers who soiled it. Indeed Philip II. would have destroyed the whole collection as a dangerous national monument, which kept alive the memory of brighter and better times, and of princes the very antipodes of his own harsh revolting nature. Marshal Saxe, though he respected the ladies' promenade, ran away with some of these

treasures, which were not restored till the reign of Louis XVI. The republic next ransacked its collections, and Napoleon, with more policy, ordered a number of the volumes to be bound in red morocco, and stamped with the imperial arms. Belgium was indebted for their last restoration to the arms and councils of the conqueror of Waterloo; and from the period of the revolution this truly national collection has remained open to the public. Our princes, who we will hope may live to remind us of the brilliant age we have described, have given orders to replace the portraits of our sovereigns of Burgundy; to continue the splendid bindings of Napoleon, and to adorn the windows in the best style of the old art. Here again we observe the tact of king Leopold, and of the excellent government of which he is the best guarantee." "But here is the gem I wished to see," I exclaimed, "the common-place book of your noble governess, truly the pearl of princesses (Marguerite), which contains her government journals, her famous treaties, in one of which—Cambray—she proved a better diplomatist than a wily cardinal; and this is the curious energetic motto which she chose;—*Fortune, infortune, fort une;* and there are the arms on the cover; and this is her autograph. Ballads, too, in the old Flemish-French, in which she showed herself no unworthy emulator of Ronsard and his compatriots. Hear her! if all our ladies' albums could be filled like this antique-looking oblong volume—in black

damask—"*couleur de ses fortunes,*" the perusal of them would be more popular; and the contributions to them, perhaps, more rare.

Quelque soit, je vous oublieray,
Pleust à Dieu que fût de ceste heure,
Mais de tant plus, qu' à ce labeure,
Tant plus en memoire vous ay.

Come weal, come woe! I said I would forget;
And would, sweet Heaven! it were this very hour;
I toil, but ah! the more I toil, my power
Is proved more vain—thy memory haunts me yet.

The same strain of plaintive melody runs through all her effusions; she almost seems, as was observed of himself, by Lorenzo de Medici, whom she strongly resembled in her high statesmanship, as well as in her enthusiasm for the arts, and her poetical sensibility, to have had two souls,—one which she gave to the world and its affairs, which she knew how to direct,—the other to the unworldly beautiful, the aspiring to the great and heavenly; the high contemplative—the struggle to reach the invisible spiritual SOMETHING—the old Platonic supreme good. This incessant longing of all high and sensitive minds (their inward light and sole real world) is beautifully developed in all her sentiments, and strikes to the innermost chords of all gentle and musing hearts. The history of her life appears to be summed up by this strange power, in a few expressive lines; and we think we see and hear her before us:—

C'est pour jamais que regret me demeure,
Qui sans cesser, nuit et jour, à tout eure,
Tant me tourmant que bien voudroie mourir.

It is for ever,—ever grief remains,
That without ceasing, night and day, each hour
Tears me within, till would death were my dower."

"And soon," interrupted my companion in his rallying tone, "you will find out that our favorite governess had three souls, for here is another work in which her soul for music and dancing—a little at variance with her Platonic tunes—appears to have been exhaled or expressed. *Plusieurs basses dances,* eh? A pretty quadrille book of the court; —rich crimson damask;—her own instructions for the dances *à la mode,* as they follow the music with each particular name, just the sets as they were called for by the living beauties of the hour, in the gay tapestried saloons of the then newly-decorated palace of Charles Quint. The very titles were enough to make the young dancers with counts, dukes, and emperors, fair votaries of love and the muse, such as *La Doulce Amour; Filles à Marier; M'Amours; Ma Vie; Va-t-en, mon amoreux desir; La Marguerite; L'Esperance de Bourbon; Le joyeux de Bruxelles;* and others as dangerous to call for, which show the Belgians of that day to have been as animated and as fond of dancing as their neighbours, before the terrific scenes enacted by Philip and Alva struck their imaginations with stern and sombre images, which impressed them-

selves on those of their children, and almost changed the national disposition for a period. "And behold another pearl, though not by one of the Marguerites," observed my friend, "but still the production of two beautiful women, for it was begun by Marie de Behercke, and finished by Wilhelma Del Väel. Here is a registry of their lady loves and griefs, and all the *hommages* rendered to triumphant beauty. But according to the old Flemish motto, "Naer lyden, kompt verflyden," "after pleasure comes pain," which you would find if you chose to pursue the chronicle of their loves—so soon turned into heartburnings and hates to its close. But it is full time we return to the palaces."

We found the *Palais du Roi* nothing to boast of, with reference either to its interior or exterior aspect; it is simple in its architecture, but rich and magnificent in its furniture and decorations. It is formed, in fact, of two hotels thrown together, and united by a sally porche, in seven arcades, supporting six Corinthian columns, each upon a single stone block. An iron balcony traverses the entire extent of the edifice, which has a regular cornice, and a garden extending to the Rue Verte. During the French sway it was occupied by the prefecture of the department of the Dyle in 1803; Napoleon, with the empress Josephine, resided in it during his stay at Brussels; and in 1811 he brought his new empress Maria Louisa to occupy the same rooms, which it was doubtless again his intention

to do in the year 1815. One of the attractions of this palace is the delightful view it affords over the park and the adjoining scenery. The Palais du Roi contains some paintings by David, and a single excellent portrait by Vandyke, the celebrated "Chapeau de Velours." Any respectable person, we believe, may have admission to the interior in the absence of the royal family.

From the king's palace the Place Royale extends as far as the *Palais Représentatif*,—the national palace or halls of the representatives. This edifice was erected in the time of Maria Theresa, from designs by Guimard, to hold the sessions of the ancient council of Brabant. The two chambers of the states-general were installed in 1818; and in the late change it has again adopted a new title,—the "Chambers of Congress." The façade is decorated with eight handsome columns, surrounded by a triangular pediment, of which the fine bas-relief has been twice wrought by the sculptor Godecharles, at an interval of above forty years. It represents a Justice seated upon a throne, the scales in her hand, surrounded by allegorical figures,—Religion, Constancy, Wisdom, and Force,—the last putting Discord and Fanaticism—a little late in the day—to an ignominious flight. We entered by a spacious and handsome hall, adorned with numerous columns, with a ground of fine marble; to the right and left are spacious marble staircases, which conducted us to the respective chambers.

We first visited that of the senate then assembled, and had the pleasure of hearing a very well conducted, temperate, and gentlemanly discussion, which struck me as exhibiting no little contrast to the violence, the party bigotry, the want of courtesy and good temper, which I had frequently had occasion to hear in other places of the kind,—a fact obvious to any one who has compared them. Yet we were not sensible of any deficiency in energy and spirit,—in freedom of debate, clear and forcible argument,—ease and fluency not unfrequently partaking of eloquence, in regard both to action and expression. There was little in the *coup d'œil* of the hall; it is quite ordinary: without ornament,—a round table covered with green cloth,—it can give no *prestige* or adventitious support to the words of a speaker, or impress the eye or the imagination of the spectator at the expense of his judgment. It was a fair test of merit; there were no wigs, gowns, or woolsacks,—and the manner and character of the debates, struck me as decidedly evincing a popular and free spirit of government. Among the questions moved for confirmation or rejection, was an extraordinary supply for the war expenses, and a permanent provision for the destitute relatives of the fallen, which were soon and satisfactorily disposed of. When I considered the different elements of which the senate was composed, even to secret friends of the former dynasty,—and it is impossible it should not be so,—I felt bound to give the mem-

bers credit for considerable moderation and forbearance. There is no question of succession between two houses; the conjunction of catholics and liberals produced a new kingdom and constitution, in which new parties developed themselves,—the catholic aristocratic predominant; the catholic in opposition; a liberal party of the administration, and a liberal in opposition. The catholic aristocrats joined a fraction of the liberal, and these formed a majority which sustained the government. The actual opposition was reduced to one-fifth of the votes, and the republican fraction left without the shadow of support. The tacit compact between the catholic aristocracy and protestant royalty was thus cemented without protocol or conference. It was dictated by respective position and circumstances of parties, though the old diplomacy denied the necessity for any such arrangement. It is singular, then, that the catholic opposition should include even young abbés, remarkable for talent, for religious fervor and sincerity; though they have no direct influence within the walls of the chamber; and without, the priestly power is decidedly on the wane. Out of the eight provinces, the two Flanders, Limburgh, Antwerp, a portion of Brabant and of Hainault, send deputies devoted to catholicism; but Brussels, Namur, Liége, and till recently Luxembourg, support liberal members with unabated spirit. These, were it not for the mode of indirect voting, would, as regards public opinion,

form the liberal government. Owing to the state of the franchise the catholic party in the two Flanders can dictate the elections by their influence with the lowest orders. They come to the vote with priests at their head; they are regularly marshalled in battle array, the stronger in the van, and the weaker in the rear, all assembled under pain of prohibited absolution. Upon one occasion the wicked liberals adroitly mingled with the flock of the faithful, and spread about the tickets bearing the name of the opposing candidate; but the manœuvre was not crowned with success, and it was properly exposed and ridiculed by the catholic party. At the head of the latter was M. Van Bommel, bishop of Liége, and M. Sterx, archbishop of Malines. Both able and accomplished men, they respected their profession too highly to become active agents; but they were regarded as the main-spring of the political religious system. Their alliance with the heads of the administration was the basis of the throne; they confirmed the power of the Merodes, the Robianos, and the Vilains XIV.,—the active central spring of the pure aristocratic doctrines of catholicism; but high-minded and patriotic, if their position and circumstances be taken into account. A biographical sketch of such men—the palladium of the nobility and of the throne, and the actors in so interesting a drama, would afford a number of characteristic traits and anecdotes. M. de Bronckère, the philo-

sopher Ahrens, M. Baron, and the celebrated Polc Lelewel, and numerous members of the administration, from the provinces of Liége and Namur, would each form a separate theme. The names of MM. Roget, Lebeau, Lecreq, De Gerlage, Ernst, Dumortier, De Theux, Dubus, M. de Muelenaere, M. Gendebien, Tielemans, and Lesbroussart,—some of whom we had the pleasure of hearing, as well as seeing,—will occupy a place in the political history of the country. M. Fleussu, of Liége, was chosen by the congress as one of the deputation to London; M. Jullien and M. Fallon, equally distinguished themselves in their respective career. Belgium in fact abounds with men of political talent and business-like habits, calculated to do honor to a free state in their respective career.

The second chamber—that of the Representatives—forms an amphitheatre not unlike the French chambers; it is lighted from above, and surrounded by a semicircular row of stucco columns, behind which are arranged the rows of seats for the accommodation of the spectators. The seats for the members themselves fill part of the same half circle, directly in front of the president's chair, and also opposite the tribune of the orators. A picture of the battle of Waterloo,—apparently painted in honor of the prince of Orange, the chief figure in it,—possessing no claims to particular notice, is seen in one of the halls. The rue de la Loi, in which the Hall of the Representatives is situated, contains also

some of the best hotels in the town; and they are in part occupied by the ministers of the interior, of the finances, of foreign affairs, and of public works.

From the National Palace of Representatives we proceeded to the Palace of the prince of Orange, erected at his private expense, the very year before the outbreak of the revolution. The king, with proper feeling, refused to take possession of it, though at first placed under sequestration, or to appropriate the least portion of its valuable contents. It is thus doubly interesting to the stranger who beholds this beautiful and exquisitely finished edifice to the greatest advantage, richly and even magnificently furnished, in the exact state in which the princes left it,—a circumstance that gives to the *tout ensemble* an additional charm. It is in fact, one of the first objects of the tourist's curiosity, for though on a small scale, the good taste, the excellent distribution of the rooms, and the varied decorations, in addition to its choice collection of art, render it by far, the pleasantest among the numerous palaces which this fine city presents to the eye. Indeed, the cost of the interior decorations, including the paintings, has been estimated at no less a sum than 200,000 francs, and in this respect it is perhaps the richest in Europe since the destruction of the Imperial Palace of St. Petersburg.

The plan of the building presents a right angle of 220 feet in length by 60 broad; but there is nothing striking in its exterior appearance. You enter by a

spacious vestibule, the ground formed of varied and exquisitely polished roots of trees in the Russian manner, and through this you are conducted to splendid staircases of white marble by which you reach the first floor; but before entering the rooms each stranger encases his feet in list slippers to save the chance of injury to the richly inlaid floors of beautifully variegated and polished wood. The first hall, that which was appropriated to the Prince's Aides-de-Camp, contains—An Annunciation, by John Van Eyck, painted for Philip the Good; and a copy by Michael Coxie, of the famous work of Van Eyck in the cathedral of Ghent. It is also richly adorned with master-pieces of the Italian school, and a few Flemish and Dutch; there is a Madonna of Andrea del Sarto; a portrait of Rembrandt painted by himself; and a fine head of Holbein. In the audience chamber next to this, we observed a small shrine; and a St. Thomas, by Rubens; a St. Paul, by Andrea del Sarto; the curious table in malachite placed between the two windows, and in the corresponding cupola which adorns the centre of the saloon: the worth of which is estimated at more than 500,000 francs. In the third are two pictures by that curious old master Steuerbout, both fine specimens, representing an event said to have occurred at the court of the emperor Otho. During the absence of the monarch, a lord, in whom he had great confidence, was falsely accused by the empress of an attempt on her honor; in one is

seen the execution of the count—in the other, the wife at the feet of the emperor, with the head of the husband in one hand, and proving his innocence by holding a red hot iron in the other. Both are highly finished, the coloring almost as fresh as when first laid on; the design bears evidence of the period when it was drawn, in 1468. The reception hall is perhaps the most splendid; it has a rich red ground of worked velvet, with large gold fringes, and the mirror over the chimney-piece, above twelve feet high, is said to be the largest that was ever cast.

The blue saloon, which immediately follows this, was the princess of Orange's separate reception room; where we met that exquisite portrait by Raphael of one of the pupils of this inimitable master; a fine one by Vandyke; a Magdalene by Schidone; and a portrait of Diana of Poictiers by Da Vinci. Among the rich articles of furniture we saw a table composed entirely of lapis lazuli, estimated to be worth its weight in gold. It is said to have cost a million and a-half of francs, and was presented by the emperor of Russia, as well as the table and the cup in the audience room of the Prince.

We now enter the spacious dining hall, richly stuccoed, and here are a few select but splendid portraits, two of them by Vandyck, and both fine specimens; and two by Velasquez, also the most favorable examples of that master, and in excellent

condition, the colors as rich as they were two centuries ago.

In the saloon of the maids of honor, we found a good specimen of Pietro Perugino, Raphael's master; a portrait of St. Augustine; a Neptune upon the waters by Albano; and a picture by Gonzales Coques, representing a Dutch family in a garden; a group of flowers by Huysum; a seascape by Backhuysen; and a landscape with animals by Verboeckhoven.

The grand saloon of audience, belonging to the Princess contains whole length portraits of the emperors of Russia, Nicholas and Alexander. There is also a fine rural piece by Ruysdael; another by Jean Both; and two seascapes by the Dutch master Schotel.

The ball room, however, is the most spacious and beautiful of all, and occupies the centre of the palace. The walls are of the whitest Carrara marble, and the light is only partially admitted from above. It is difficult to convey an idea of the dazzling splendor of this saloon when lighted up by thousands of wax lights, reflected from the rich polish and whiteness of the marble walls: twelve candelabra of golden bronze, hung from the spacious ceiling, cost 60,000 francs.

There are few cities so rich in private collections as Brussels. The inhabitants generally possess a taste for the arts, and there are hundreds of amateurs who, without pretending to form galleries,

possess individual works, both of the old masters, and the modern school of Belgic art, which they do all in their power to encourage. The gallery of the duc d'Arenberg—lately enlarged to a considerable extent,—is open to the public. It is almost wholly confined to Flemish paintings; some family portraits by Vandyke; several of Rubens' sketches; many Wouvermans,—Ostade—Ruysdael; and a very choice Adrien Brauwer. We observed an elaborate specimen of Jordaens—the "Concert de Famille," an interior by P. Dehooge, masterly in point of perspective; two Canaletti, and innumerable copies from Correggio, Rembrandt, and Claude Lorraine. Two of the specimens attributed to the latter master are evidently copies; there are some pretty seascapes by Vernet, and a very pleasing Watteau. The portion added to it from the collection of the deceased prince, consists chiefly of Rembrandts, Gerard Dows, a Rubens, Jean Steen, and in particular an Adrien Van de Velde, of extreme beauty, two Wynandts, and several Italian and Spanish paintings.

In the Hotel du Prince de Ligne there are a few very choice specimens from his rich gallery of ancient paintings, at his castle of Bel Œil; and in that of M. Maleck de Werthenfels, we saw an admirable selection in different departments, which my companion pronounced to be one of the best in the country. An idea may at once be formed of its rare value, when we mention, to begin with, a

Gioconda of Da Vinci, which will not shrink from a comparison with the one in the Musée at Paris. A beautiful bust, from the original, by Geefs, is the admiration of all connoisseurs, and was deservedly appreciated by every one who saw it in the great exhibition at Antwerp. My friend next pointed out to mé à Raphael, in his first manner, the unique gem, he added, of which Belgium could boast; two of Paul Potter only inferior, he said, to the splendid specimens contained in the Musée at Amsterdam, and in that of La Haye. Next he led me to a St. Rosaire, by Rubens, a very beautiful and finished specimen; and another, drawn to the life, of two children playing with a lamb; two sketches of the same master, Christ between the two Thieves, the original of which is in the Musée at Antwerp. Then we came to a grand portrait of Vandyke, painted by himself, two of Murillo, both fine, one Velasquez, two Holbein, an Albert Durer, three portraits of Cranach, and one of Rembrandt. Never had we beheld a richer assemblage, in such a space, of gems of the early modern masters; my friend, though he had often seen them, was quite enraptured at the expression of my admiration; he seemed again to enjoy their sight for the first time, and, with M. Passevant in his hand, would willingly have devoted hours to this single collection. "Now you have the opportunity I wished," he said, "of comparing our native masters with the best Italian and Spanish models,—what think you

of our Rubens, Vandykes, Rembrandts, Steens, and Teniers,—without the help, too, of our Van Eykes and Memlings, at the side of Da Vinci, Raphael, Murillo, and Velasquez?" "That they deserve to be placed at the side of them," was my reply, "they lose nothing by it; nor do they seem thrown into the shade, or to stand less in high relief than before." "That is the way to judge of them," exclaimed the count, rubbing his hands with evident delight, "by the very simplest rules,—by the effect,—by sustained impressions upon the eye and upon the mind. See, here is the famous Predication of St. John, let him exhort you; the fire is already leaving your eye; and this is a *corps de garde* of Teniers, of which we saw the copy by Tilbourg, in the collection of the duc d'Arenberg.

"There is also a small cabinet of curiosities,—a *scribanium,* or writing desk, which belonged to Margaret of Parma,—an admirable piece of mechanism, which is exhibited for the benefit of the poor. See how ingenious! it divides into two compartments, the upper of which is the work of your old acquaintance Cellini; (for I know you edited *his* works, as well as that of Lanzi) decorated with splendid silver inlaid work, and sparkling with thousands of genuine precious gems,—the inferior is the work of Boulle, which for perfection surpasses everything we know of that celebrated sculptor and ivory worker.

"The history of the *scribanium* would in itself

make a very pretty novel, though sufficiently partaking of that modern ingredient for which we should find a new name—called scandal. It would be curious to follow its possession through different hands, till it came into those of the Brussels commission for the conservation of the Musée. By them it was sold for a sum ludicrously low, which would scarcely pay half the price of one of the agates that adorn the top of the pretty toy-port made by Boulle. Whether ignorance or negligence, it is the same; Brussels confided some of the most precious objects of art to a commission which sacrificed not only mechanical curiosities but paintings, and objects of art intimately connected with historical associations of the city. There is for instance that magnificent model of the waving tower of prince Charles of Lorraine, lost; and so it would have been with the cradle of the emperor Charles V., still buried in the dust of the garrets in the Musée, had not public indignation been directed towards it by the pitiful sale of the duchess's secretaire. It has not however been the lot of Rubens' fowling-piece, richly set and silver mounted, an exquisitely formed barrel of proof, whether or not it belonged to the lord of Steen."

In the collections of Colonel Biré, Colonel Moyars, M. Van de Becelaer, and the baron de Wykersloot, we also found some more modern specimens, besides Gerard Dows, Vandevèldes, Hobbema, Berchem, Koekock, Schelfhout, and Schotel;

the most of them Dutch artists, and the specimens of them very good.

The comte Vilain Quatorze, has in his possession an exquisite painting, belonging to the school of Raphael;—the Virgin and the Infant, with compartments equally beautiful in the old style of the art. It is difficult amidst so wide and rich a field, to delineate particular subjects; but in addition we should advise strangers to consult the select few which adorn the rooms of le comte Coghen, Charles de Brouckère, M. Van der Belen, Van Nieuwenhuysen, Tielens, Coor, Van der Meeren, Ost, Le Roy, Puttemans, and M. Van Callemberg.

Speculators in pictures are pretty numerous at Brussels. M. Heris enjoys great celebrity in this line, and few pictures in Europe have recently fallen to the hammer, which have not first passed through the hands of the pictorial giant and monopolist of his age. *En passant,* at least we had the good fortune to see that fine historical landscape of Teniers, in which he has painted himself and his family, seated before his pleasant house, the *Dry Toren,* at Perck, near Vilvorde, as already described; and there is a Family Festival, by Jean Steen, and an Interior, by A. Van Ostade, than which nothing can be imagined more true. Hence we passed through the *Place des Martyrs,* formerly de St. Michael,—in the form of an oblong parallelogram, planted with a double row of lime trees, and surrounded with handsome edifices and co-

lumns of the Doric order. It was first constructed by Fisco in 1775, and has been justly extolled as one of the best-formed squares in Brussels. It forms an agreeable promenade, at one time dedicated to the patron saint of the city. It is situated at the north east extremity, and in the memorable days of 1830 it was selected for the burial-place of the fallen. More than 300 were interred on a single day; the ceremony was attended by numbers of the clergy, and an immense throng of armed patriots. The central part was deeply excavated in order to admit four rows of Sarcophagi, from the midst of which rises a lofty pedestal, surmounted by a colossal statue of Liberty in white marble, by the celebrated Geefs, who has represented the moment when she has just broken the chains of Belgium, which lie scattered at her feet.

These precincts, held sacred by the patriotic party, and respected by the higher classes and nobility, as the statue of Merode, in the *Blouse bleu*, sufficiently attests, embrace also a small garden filled with shrubs and beds of flowers, distributed with taste over the whole of this vast and magnificent tomb.

The environs of Brussels, like those of nearly all the great towns of Belgium, abound with objects of historical interest and of the highest picturesque character. The ruins of the old feudal castles, as you proceed towards the south, frowning from lofty crag, or over the dark glen, of splendid abbeys and lonely monasteries,—the bell-capped mansion and

modern chateau, afford views of varied beauty, and full of pictorial effect. In whatever direction you bend your steps you meet with scenes still attractive to an artist's eye, and it is for this reason that on reaching Brussels, a stranger who really wishes to become acquainted with Belgium, the peculiarities of its scenery and its inhabitants, should adopt the national dress, and wholly abandon the high route, except occasionally to convey him to a fresh vicinity, which he should completely explore, and contrive, as far as possible, never to retrace his steps. This was the plan we adopted—with our new costume—on leaving Brussels to visit the pleasant valley and little village of Etterbeck; the noble park of La Cambre; Boisfort, a perfect Swiss hamlet, shadowed with the dark line of the forest, and above all the Grönendale, amidst whose glades and dells, crowned with rich woods and picturesque ruins, you hear—

"The ceaseless warbling of the bird of night."

It was here the Infanta Isabel retired from the cares and sorrows of a court; Charles V. bade farewell to his ambition; and a modern prince and statesman banished himself from the beautiful paradise he had adorned on the outbreak of the revolution. We retired with regret from the beautiful pavilion and rendezvous de chasse, and set out for the plains of Waterloo.

CHAPTER XIV.

The second Pharsalia—Scenery of the South—Dinant and its Vicinity Historical Facts Ruins of Bouvignes and Franchimont—Adventures and Escapes—Romantic Passion—Traditions of Liége—Superstitious Hours—Eccentric Characters—Scenery round the Ardennes Environs of Liége Optical Effects.

We spent several hours on that magnificent field which, like Pharsalia, seemed to us to have been formed for deciding the destinies of a world, which crowned its hero with the last of his hundred victories,—but has been too often described to merit further details, except from the pen of great military men. Our object was the banks of the Sambre and the Meuse; the picturesque scenery round the towns of Namur, Dinant, Liége, Spa, and the old forests and vales of the Ardennes. The route from Brussels to Namur calls for no remark; it is between Namur—the city of the citadel—and Dinant that we meet with a succession of varied and beautiful scenery from points of view that offer the most

picturesque *coups d'œil*—on a small scale affording those pretty contrasts, those milder features, which in landscape produce what is termed repose; or as one of our poets beautifully expresses it, "the sabbath silence of the hills." The eye is never wearied with the continued variety of lofty and richly-varied rocks, old castellated ruins on the declivity of the hills, the pretty hamlets and streams usually found at their foot,—pleasant mansions surrounded with flower and fruit gardens; and flower enamelled meadows on the skirts of groves vocal with the songs of a thousand birds, diversified as the colors of the woods and rocks that heighten the delicious scenery around you.

Dinant, as it here appears in semblance as true as the echo to the voice, lies embosomed, as you see it, in the heart of the richest scenery of the Meuse, between the river on one side, and on the other enclosed and shut in with its proud jutting citadel, its range of rocky eminences beyond, which, with its grand roche *Bayard,* form its natural and majestic outworks, not only serving as a defence but as a foundation and integral portion of the town. Not less ancient than its fortress, it figured early in the Christian era, and in the fifth century it united with Huy and Liége, in opposing the power of the House of Burgundy. The Dinanters declared war against Philip le Bon, and entered his *comté de Namur,* where they committed the greatest excesses. Highly indignant, the duke raised an army, and, but for

the intercession of the bishop of Liége, would have utterly destroyed the city.

In the reign of Louis XI., they were again incited to resistance, and in the idea that the comte de Charolais had been worsted by the Liégeois, they burnt him in effigy at the entrance to the town of Bouvignes. "See," they exclaimed, "the son of your duke, the traitor count de Charolais, whom the king of France will cause to be hanged as you see him hang here." To show them he was not yet hung, the duke laid siege to the place; it was incapable of a long defence; and Philip offered them terms of capitulation, which they rejected, and hung the bearer as they had threatened to do his son. Justly incensed, the duke gave the assault, and the magistrates shortly sent a deputation, offering him the keys of the town. During three days it was given up to fire and pillage; the governor was hung from the top of the vast rock that overhangs the river, and many of the inhabitants were, two by two, precipitated into the waves; nor did the duke quit the horrid scene till he had beheld Dinant entirely razed and consumed. The lesson, however, seemed lost on the survivors if there were any; for in 1554, having rebuilt their town, they had the foolhardiness to take part in the war between Henry II. of France, and Charles V. When asked by the duke de Nemours if they would preserve a neutrality, the Dinanters made the elegant reply, that if they caught either the king or the

duke, they would assuredly eat the best parts of them for their breakfasts. As fortune would have it, however, the two Frenchmen—though only two —devoured the Dinanters, city and all, which they gave up to pillage. In its history, indeed, Dinant may be said to be almost merged in that of Liége and Namur, in regard to which it performed only a subsidiary part.

The approach from the point in which the artist took the accompanying view, is striking and picturesque; and when the evening sun gilds the spire of Notre Dame, and the salient parts of the fortress and surrounding hills, it appears illumined with a golden flood. The church itself presents a noble monument of the fifteenth century; the Hotel de Ville served as a palace for the prince of Liége; the castle was erected in 1530, by Evrard de la Marck, bishop of Liége, upon the site of the famous tower of Montorgueil.

After visiting the romantic castles of Freir, Walsin, and the vast Roche Bayard, pierced by Louis XIV., we crossed the river, to obtain a more commanding view of the splendid ruins of an antique tower, erected on the summit of a vast rock, as early as 1321, and which bears the singular name of Crève-cœur, or heart-break,—derived from the circumstances which attended the fate of its former possessors. From its walls three lovely sisters are stated to have beheld their respective lords fall in battle, defending the castle from its invaders; and

when on the point of falling into the enemy's hands, choosing death rather than dishonor, they threw themselves from the loftiest battlements,—an event that is referred by contemporary authorities to the year 1554. The ruins of the castle are still a conspicuous object, and with the character of the surrounding scenery, the wooded and jagged rocks, the bright expanding river, the town and fortress of Dinant resting upon the hills seen beyond, as represented from the point of view in which the artist has here given them, with the road passing immediately under the frowning precipice, form a *coup d'œil* of extreme beauty, and one which conveys an admirable impression of the scene. The effect of the sun-light upon the spires and towers; the rich hues reflected in the waters, the deep blue, and green tinged sky, threw a halo of warm and brilliant colors over the spot as we saw it, than which nothing could be more attractive to a painter's eye. It is perhaps of all the most picturesque and romantic that is to be seen along the banks of the Meuse. Upon again reaching the foot of the tremendous rock from which frowns the once stately castle in ruined grandeur, a handsome equipage with outriders dashed suddenly by; and looking round I beheld the royal arms and livery. It was king Leopold returning from a visit to Paris; but more immediately from his new country seat, pleasantly situated between Namur and the frontiers. To this he is said to be extremely attached, and makes it his favorite place of residence, for shooting, fish-

T. Allom

Prior

Tower of Croncaau,

upon the Maese

ROYAL ASTATIC SOCIETY
NORTH AMERICA

ing, as well as for his rural occupations, in materials for all which it abounds, far more than the palace grounds of Laeken. Simple and manly in all his tastes, there was nothing gaudy, or which partook of the pomp and tinsel of mere display in his appearance and style of travelling.

The village of Bouvignes lies at the foot of this magnificent mountain; and in the wars of the Liégeois we hear of one of its lords, Messire de Crève-cœur, of Corde, who assailed them with so much spirit that they fled in a moment, notwithstanding their long pikes, with which they pushed the archers. In the feudal wars of these stirring times, no one was so conspicuous as William, surnamed the Wild Boar of Ardennes, who scattered his foes as his namesake rends the brushwood of the forest. Another dreaded name was Charles the Bold, who not only routed their forces, but fixed the yoke on the necks of the refractory cities who disowned his sway. The fine old castle of Franchimont, the ruins of which we visited, in our walks along the Meuse,—between Verviers and Spa,—poured forth its knights, nearly a thousand, armed *cap à pie* against the famed duke, devoting themselves to almost certain death, and their exploits were sung by the great national bards :—

> " Dirai-je, en célébrant la valeur des Liégeois,
> Le noble dévouement de ces Franchemontois,
> Qui firent (du trépas victimes volontaires)
> L'offrande de leur sang pour affranchir leurs frères,

Surpassant d'autant plus les Decius mourants,
Qu'au lieu de trois héros, Liége en compte six cents."

These brave men of Franchimont nearly succeeded in surprising the duke and freeing their countrymen from his iron grasp; they penetrated the tent of Louis XI.; another moment and their oppressors would be their captives; but with the approach of day their number was ascertained, and they fell like the Spartan in the straits. Never was desolation greater than that which followed the duke's occupation of Liége after the battle; the happiest were those who fell in the action. Fathers were seen in the act of immolating their daughters to save them from pollution as well as death; sisters were seen soliciting death from their brothers; the brides and the betrothed from those dearer to them than life; and in default of stern honor sufficing to inflict it, laying violent hands on themselves; for so great was the inhumanity of the victors, that they sought to make parents the inflictors of torments upon their own offspring. The duke and his myrmidons meantime feast to the sound of this terrific music, and cries of mercy are in vain addressed to him who never felt and never found it, when he lay stripped and exposed,—slain by his enemies on the battle field. It is a singular fact that the principal actors in this bloody tragedy nearly all perished by a violent or dreadful death. Imbercourt was beheaded; Louis de Bourbon was assassinated by William the Wild Boar; and Louis

XI. perished in prolonged tortures of soul and body almost unprecedented; while De la Marck, the assassin, lost his head upon the scaffold.

In the dreadful sack of Liége by a prince of Orange in 1568, many singular and hair-breadth escapes have been related, which almost exceed belief. The young and beautiful Catherine de Goor, abbess of Herkenrode, had the presence of mind at the moment of assault to exchange dresses with a miller's boy; she mounted in his place; and drove the horses out of the city gates to the safer asylum of a neighbouring mill. Headed by their bishops, the Liégeois often renewed the struggle, and frequently with success; and another instance of singular fortitude and address is recounted of a young lady of rank,—Beatrice Delvaux, who was surprised in an isolated situation, and about to fall a victim to the brutal appetite of a common soldier. She promised freely to gratify the wretch's wishes, if he would withdraw with her to a particular spot, —he consented,—and when they drew nigh to it, she seized her opportunity and hurled him headlong down an open shaft, not unfrequent round that part of Liége.

To the old convent of St. Walburgh there attaches also a legend which long passed from father to son, and became the burden of many a mournful ditty. An orphan youth of Borlé was taken into the house of his uncle to learn his business, but he proved a tyrant—a harsh man who had

amassed money and wanted to amass more, without paying a doit to him who worked for it. Providence generally repays this ingratitude in the manner it deserves. He was the father of a beautiful girl named Lamertine, who had not beheld the merit of the young clerk with equal indifference. It was long before either suspected the nature of the other's feelings; and it had been longer had not older and uglier eyes than their own been upon them. It was this which first opened theirs to the real truth; and no sooner had they expressed their mutual wishes, and exchanged eternal vows, than the young man was driven with ignominy from the rich man's door. The daughter at the same time became a prisoner; with the sole option of marrying another or burying herself for life in a cloister. She did not hesitate, and joined the fair Sepulcrines of St. Walburgh.

We may better imagine than describe the interval between the banishment of the youth and his discovery of the irreparable evil that had befallen himself, and her on whose head he had so early brought misfortune; no language could give an idea of the sufferings each endured for the other. He knew the convent; and chance gave him a knowledge of the very spot where she was immured. After many struggles he resolved to risk even her fame dearer to him than life—once to see, to hear her voice once more. Walls and bars seem no longer an obstacle; and on the ensuing night

they converse like Romeo and Juliet. To fly and live only for each other is the resolve of a moment. The means are supplied; she is descending into his arms; another step and she is safe—when from the excess of terror or emotion her tender hands lose their grasp; one piercing cry and the rush of the air tell the hapless lover through the darkness all the horrors of his fate. The next moment she breathed her last sigh in his arms. He fled madly from the spot; nor, according to the legend, was he afterwards seen, having, it is conjectured, flung himself into one of those pits with which the vicinity abounds, thus sharing the fate of her he loved. Some thought he had retired among the Trappists, his sisters having two years afterwards put on mourning, and the church of Borlé performed a mass for the peace of his soul.

Not a few traditions have survived connected with the citadel of Liége, among which specially figures the flogging major's ghost, or *le chien de la Ronde*—calculated for the meridian of the old soldiers' cups. The major, it seemed, played the spy upon the sentinels; and the better to surprise them napping approached them on his hands and knees; he had often had the men punished; till one, more ingenious than his fellows, having one night caught sight of him, gave the *qui vive* three times, and receiving no answer, very coolly shot the "crawling dog of a major," as they termed him, through the head. Of course the culprit was had up, but

having fired according to orders was acquitted. But "the dog of a major" did not quit him so easily, for the ensuing night on watch an immense one ran under his legs—*le chien de la Ronde* had commenced his rounds—and it rested only with the priest to lay the canine phantom of the more than ever dreaded major. From the mere circumstance of night watching,—the most approved recipe for seeing ghosts,—no people are so prone to superstition as soldiers and sailors; and thus, though the bravest of mankind from habit and experience, none look at the supernatural with so much undisguised dread. The Friday of the seaman—and the dead hour of the night—a significant phrase peculiar to the soldier, to show to whom it belongs, no man of common sense among them ever dared to tempt without repenting his rashness. An event which produced a very lively emotion, or rather the opposite of lively, throwing a whole family into the utmost consternation, is recorded to have taken place exactly in the neighbourhood of the major's mishap, the scene of *le chien de la Ronde's* nightly walks. But I must first observe that whether or not the latter had undergone another *metempsychosis*, it is certain there subsequently appeared a very singular character among the military who formed the garrison of Liége. He entered the regiment of *Le Prince;* appeared to have seen long service; professed himself a Liégeois, and held on his thirty years probation for *invalideship*

with extraordinary spirit and perseverance. It was his conduct and habits during and after this period, which excited the suspicions not only of his mess-mates, but of the inhabitants; for he buried himself in the most complete obscurity; went out at nights,—visited the most retired places,—and was supposed to be holding communion with those whom he should rather avoid. He was besides a great economist, and refused to pay visits and to give dinners—an inexpiable offence in the eyes of social and generous stomached officers; and he soon found, like the major, that it is as well to hang or shoot him as to give a dog a bad name, whether given by the soldiers or by their officers. He was revered by the soldiers as the major had been hated; and was hated by the officers as the major had been reverenced, for his sneaking discipline on all fours to catch a sentinel asleep; and for which he retained so fourfooted a predilection after death, which certainly had the effect of keeping the fellows wide awake, for never more dared they to wink an eye till they were relieved. But the captain was quite of another stamp,—he became part and parcel of the soldiers' joys and troubles;—he fed the hungry, doctored the sick, worked on the ramparts for the weary, threw himself into the gap for delinquents, played with their children, and followed them, after paying them the last offices, to the grave. Yet withal he had the most infamous character with all other ranks, and even among

them for works of necromancy, and his nightly attendance upon some horrible and forbidden rites. Yet when a strong north-wester blew right in the teeth of the demi-lune, the most exposed point of the citadel,—when he drew nigh the poor exhausted sentinel in the mid-watch, trembling alike with cold and fear, and invited him to warm himself at his hearth and repose upon his couch, while he shouldered the musquet in the youth's place,—all suspicions vanished before the inspiring voice of "Go my boy, and warm yourself at my fire, while I mount guard with your cloak and gun."

Among his other accomplishments, being an admirable mimic, he ran no risk of discovery, for he was then supposed to be deeply busied with the secrets of the black art.

During fifty winters the kind-hearted and beneficent soldier ministered to the wants and sufferings of his poorer brethren; the influence of his example was not lost; for them he lived and for them he died in obscurity; and his memory is still cherished by the oldest soldiers in the garrison, perhaps most of all because his active beneficence went far to relieve them from their fears of *le chien de la Ronde*. In a sphere befitting so good and magnanimous a being, who resented not even the suspicions of those whom he benefited, he would have vied with the greatest and most successful reformers of mankind; for had he, as reported, the magic possession of an inexhaustible fund it was a magic

beloved by the wives and daughters of the poorest officers and soldiers, as well as by those of the surrounding peasantry, who yearly adorn his tomb with flowers. In our walk round the ramparts the oldest soldier, who officiated as a guide, was our companion, and happily so, for they are so singularly constructed in a successive series, and the termination is so overgrown with verdure, that unless a stranger uses great precaution he may be apt to walk over a precipice or two. He related to me the manner in which the old captain took leave of his fellow soldiers,—the French revolutionists were at the gates; the garrison was drawn out on the parade of the citadel—under arms from daylight till seven o'clock at night. The French batteries at Hovemont were scattering the branches of the trees above the place where they stood; but the aged invalid was seen pacing along the ranks, and pressing the hands of each, while there was scarcely a dry eye, for he was leaving them for his last home. "Adieu, friend L—, adieu. God bless you," was heard from line to line. "Adieu, my children, my friends," replied the old man, as he took a last leave of the scene of his self-devoted and benignant deeds.

Another eccentric character who made his appearance among the medical officers of the garrison, was De Launay, a man intensely devoted to the study of the practical sciences; and more especially, as it appeared, of anatomical investigations. He

one day marked the spot where the body of a suicide had been laid without the precincts of holy ground. The surgeon major in chief was the learned Demets, whose house had a back entrance at the termination of the declivity in coming from the heights of the citadel. De Launay obtained permission to remove the body to his exhibition room, in order to supply a few lectures for the young students. With two sergeants and an assistant surgeon, and with extreme toil and difficulty, they contrived to raise it to the point called the 600 degrees. The height was covered with snow and exceedingly slippery; it was December; and at last they hit on the expedient of a sledge, on which to convey it with more ease, especially in descending the other side. Like sons of Aymon, these knights of the sledge acquitted themselves with great bravery and dexterity, till they came to a sudden turn in the declivity which completely upset the surgeon and the two sergeants, leaving De Launay alone with the body of the suicide proceeding down—down, at a high-pressure engine speed. At length, after some hard rubs, the sledge finds its level like the water, and falls into the old dry ravine, at the bottom of which stands the entrance to the house of the old major doctor. It was a terrible crash—that, which drove in the door of the quiet family mansion;—the coffin flew into a thousand shivers,—and the living and the dead are very unceremoniously emptied into the laps of the doctor's lady and his daughters, to the

no small terror of all the inmates and their neighbours. Besides fainting fits in abundance, "one of the ladies was seized with an attack of jaundice," says the city chronicler, "which had nearly cost her her life." So terrible was the reputation acquired by De Launay in this feat, that, like a second Richard *Cœur de Lion,* his name became the talisman to hush the cries of naughty children; and when at length he died, all the noisy urchins round the citadel piled a heap of stones upon his grave, not to raise a pyramid to his memory, but in the hope to prevent his ever getting up again.

On our return, after partaking an excellent table d'hote,* we took a pleasant stroll as far as the *Etablissement des Plantes,* an extensive and magnificent collection—botanical, herbal, and floral, formed with wonderful care and taste, and as admirably arranged by the ingenious and scientific M. Jacobs de Makroy. It would be difficult to point out the rarest plant that has not its *habitat* in one of the splendid series or divisions of hot-houses; with gardens which contain so great a profusion of specimens, and so many curious va-

* At "Les Deux Fontaines," our head quarters,—and excellent ones they were! For variety and abundance—exquisite wines and viands—moderate charges; courteous and even devoted attentions to its guests, no establishment in Liége can surpass "Les Deux Fontaines;" or the genuine good-humored politeness and superior well-informed character of its host. It is quite surprising how every comfort, elegance, and even luxury, including fine Moselle, Claret, and Burgundy, can be supplied upon the terms they are here to be had.

rieties of the same plants, as these *Jardins du vrai plaisir*, which would have delighted the heart of Delille, as they must of every admirer of the beauties of nature, arranged with singular skill and science. The view of the town and surrounding country from this fine and elevated site, and the heights above, presents an interesting *coup d'œil* on every side; and on taking leave of the agreeable and intelligent proprietor we visited other interesting spots in the neighbourhood. Jemeppe, Tilleur, Seraing, Huy, Argenteau, Hermalle, Waremme, Chaude Fontaine, and excursions to the Ardennes, Verviers, and Spa, will afford the traveller, whatsoever be his tastes—sporting, pictorial, or poetical —most delightful days, in no worse company than Shakspeare's and his bright fancy's companions, old Adam, Jacques, Rosalind, without consulting any one's pleasure but the poet's, and taking for his knight-adventurers' motto, "As you like it." The scenery between Liége and Chaudefontaine, and thence to Verviers, which we traversed on foot through the fresh and winding valley of the Vesdre, continually presenting new and striking points of view which awaken the fancy and delight the eye, was perfectly enchanting in the season we saw it; and it was no little self-denial that led us to decline the sporting expeditions in the forests, and on the clear bright rivers, which run for miles amidst a variety of rock, wood, and glen, with sometimes an old castle frowning from the adjacent

summits—the dark and lonely woods around,—and at its feet, some quiet little hamlet in its nook, forming a landscape in which nothing was to be desired. From Verviers we returned over the wild heath and mountain tracts which present the eye with some splendid sites—the magnificent scenery round the Pavilion of Juslenville; the romantic ruins of Franchimont, the splendid castle of Wegimont—old Theux—and the pretty Spa in its delicious salubrious valley, dotting the dark line of the old Ardennes, on each of which pleasant volumes, descriptive and legendary, might be written. Pity we have no more space to dwell on our excursions round Verviers and Spa,—the picturesque vale of l'Amblève, its delicious springs and rivers; its waterfalls and fountains, in which no district is so rich as the environs of Liége. Malmedy, Stavelot, the grand cascade of Coo, the pleasant sites of Cour and Roanne,—all which you may safely explore with the aid of the small sure-footed steed of the Ardennes, astonish you by their mingled beauty and magnificence, especially after leaving the flat tracts of the north and west, offering a delicious contrast to the eye and the mind. In no part has nature been more lavish of her natural treasures. But the illusion at times presented by the cascade surpasses all, not less remarkable in its phenomena than the grotto of Fryen, and the hamlet and grotto of Remouchamps, with their wild romantic scenery. In the sunset of a splendid day, the appearance of

the western mountains, as if disposed in a series of different planes, about half obscured by the effect of the *mirage* of the sun,—present the exact character of a sea rolling its succession of mighty waves; and the mind, if intently viewing them, becomes, as in the sands of the east, fascinated and troubled by the continued alluring images,—a natural sensation, which, as also in moral and intellectual pursuits, if not resisted, terminates in producing an hallucination, which gradually absorbs ideas of the real; the tendency of which sentiment has conducted millions of more imaginative minds to their destruction.

We experienced something of this sentiment on entering the splendid grottoes of Freyen and of Remouchamps. The strange fanciful forms of the stalactites, the variegated colors of the crystalised roofs, the booming sound of the waters in their mighty caverns, and especially the Hall of Ruins, as it is called, formed of huge rocks piled upon rocks in a vast vaulted space, fill the mind with a confusion of images, and sensations of mingled awe and admiration:

> "Ces roches amoncelis, par leur chute fendus,
> L'un sur l'autre, au hazard sont restés suspendus.
> Les ans ont cimenté leur bizarre structure
> Et recouvert leurs flancs d'une humide parure."

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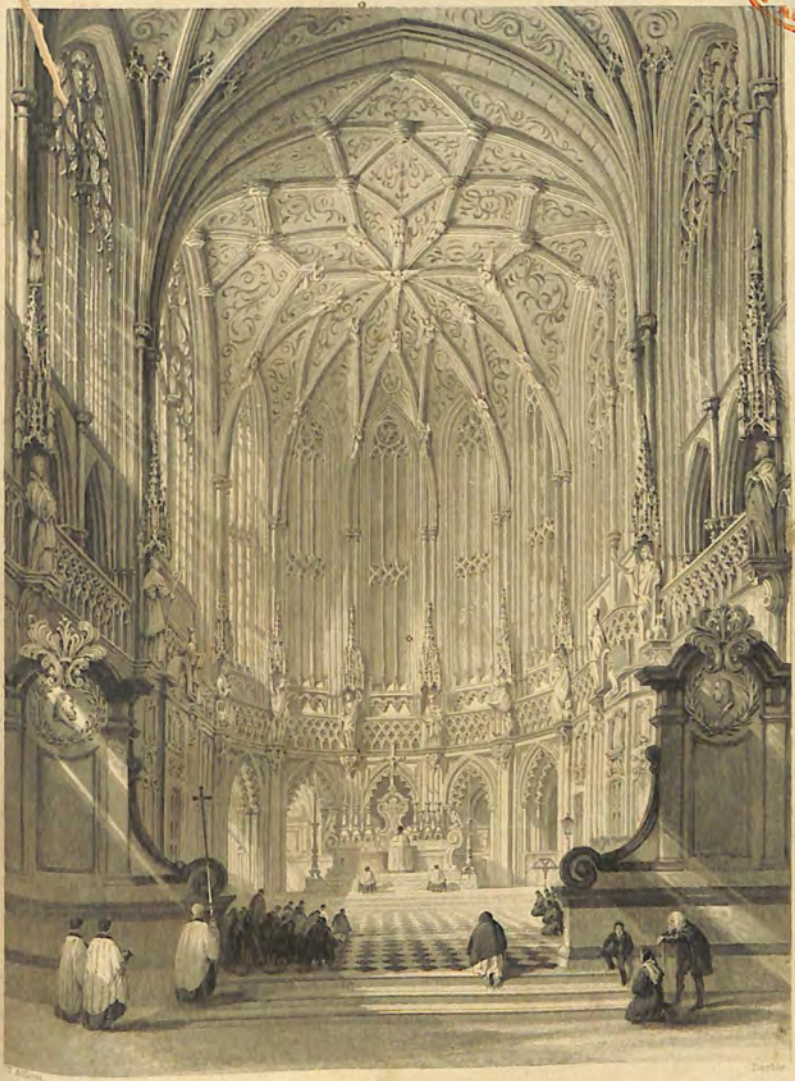

Church of St James
Liege

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CHAPTER XV.

Return to Liége—Church of St. James—Interior—Description of the City—Its Antique Fame and Institutions—Warrior Churchmen—Historic Tracts—Retributive Act—Louvain Town Hall—Return by Antwerp—Festival in Honor of Rubens.

Our first object on revisiting Liége was to see the church of St. James, the interior of which presents a combination of the richest and most elegant Gothic of different periods, seen under its happiest character and effects. It is the architectural miracle of Liége, for to the antique Gothic it adds all the ornate and fanciful peculiarities of the Moorish. No words can describe the impression made by the splendid and spacious nave, at once graceful and majestic, which inspires and elevates the soul no less than it rivets the eye. The ceiling seems to lose itself in space, with its fine-wrought edges interlaced with perfect symmetry, and which serve to decorate a series of medallions, some of which are

without covering, and others bearing the casque peculiar to the sixteenth century. The edifice itself was completed in 1522, and every successive abbot or bishop devoted himself to its extension and embellishment. The delicacy of the fret-work, the traceries, and the buttresses in different parts, render it one of the most remarkable and impressive specimens of interior architecture that is to be found not only in Liége, but in the churches of every other part of Europe. The ceiling is most gracefully supported by light buttresses, formed from the grand spacious windows, and carried out by two galleries in ogive arcades, which crown a delicate balustrade, the stone of which appears twisted as lightly as a rush, and to rest gracefully on the points of the arches. In the choir below, little vaulted arches, always of the same ornate Gothic, a number of chapels, the entrance to which is not perceived, except from the church, give to the whole coup d'œil an imposing and yet mysterious air. But the main attraction, perhaps, of this splendid interior, as it here appears represented in its leading features, is the rich and highly harmonious mingling of the peculiar decorations of different epochs, the distinctive marks of which are confounded in each other. We thus observed a happy specimen of the Arab, with its elegant traceries, in the tower; of Gothic and Moorish in the entire edifice; and the frontispiece of the portal, executed after the design of Lombart, belongs to the style which

marked the age of the revival of art. The organ with its immense side pannels, richly gilt and painted on the inside, with portraits of saints and angels, is one of the most noble in the world. The church contains several statues and paintings, but of ordinary merit; and it is to the elegant rich-wrought arches, the festoons, and traceries, that it justly owes the celebrity it has acquired. In the vacant space between the heads of each arcade, are medallion portraits of kings, princes, prophets, &c., with their names, and the extracts written in Gothic characters from the Scriptures which relate to each.

The vast richly-decorated ceiling, windows, galleries, and balcony, which is continued round the exterior edifice, with the profuse specimens of art, give an imposing effect to the whole, which leaves a strong impression on the mind.

Liége was early distinguished for its republican spirit and free institutions, insomuch as to have acquired the title of the daughter of Rome; nor was it less noted for its freedom from those religious wars and dissensions which devastated other states. Its bishops were among the most useful and enlightened of its princes, till the intrigues and violence of foreign powers disturbed its admirable statutes, and destroyed in part its constitution. Not a few, however, among the soldier-bishops of that stirring period, were as tyrannical as other governors; and their wars with the princes of the times and with each other, produced many instances of

family feuds, and deadly private revenge. Henri de Gueldre, one of these warrior bishops, when the guest of the noble family of the Deprez, was guilty of an atrocity which, with his other crimes, finally brought him to a violent death, and covered his name with infamy. Conrard, one of the bravest cavaliers of his age, had a daughter celebrated for her charms both of mind and person. This powerful ecclesiastic, himself a prince, and courted by the nobles, was so fascinated by the exquisite beauty of the lovely Bertha, that though he knew she was betrothed to her cousin, Thierry Deprez, he resolved to risk everything, and even violated the laws of hospitality for the gratification of a passion which he had too often indulged with impunity. Possessed of immense wealth as well as influence, the same night, the evening of which he had passed in the society of Thierry Deprez and his betrothed, he bribed her two women by immense offers and threats combined, to admit him into her chamber, and there, in spite of her piercing cries and struggles, the echoes of which died away in the vaults of the grand donjon, which yet remain, and which we visited, he succeeded in his nefarious purpose, and consummated a crime which he had no sooner committed than he was struck with the keenest remorse and terror, like Tarquin, when he quitted the couch of his friend and hospitable entertainer. The prince bishop, the moment light dawned on that disastrous night, appalled

at the sight of his insensible victim,—flew with the presentiment of hell in his heart, and threw himself at the foot of the altar of that oratory of the family, before which the pure and spotless Bertha was to exchange her marriage vows with the companion, the lover, and friend of her youthful years.

To describe the scenes which ensued would baffle the powers of the most sensitive poet or artist who ever swayed the passions of the human breast. Imagine what we cannot portray,—the despair and speedy death of Bertha,—the horror of her betrothed husband, who at the same altar that witnessed the terror of the despoiler of the happiness of so many, took oath to inflict a fearful revenge. The most remarkable part of this fearful drama, consists in its being strictly historical,—recorded both in the Belgian and in papal annals as matter of unquestioned fact. The family of the Deprez brought their bitter complaint regularly before the tribunal of the chapter, and the powerful bishop had the audacity to appear at the first conclave. Up rose a member of the family of Duprez, the archdeacon Thibaut; and in a tone of fervid indignation denounced the infamy of the delinquent; ample proofs of the crime were exhibited by him before the assembled diet; at the same time he invited every man's hand to smite the offender as placed without the pale of human society and laws. What was the reply? The violator struck the archdeacon in full assembly, and even

kicked him without a hand being raised in his defence.* The hands of the Deprez however were ready, and the prince bishop was with difficulty rescued from their grasp.† It is singular to watch the process of retribution on the guilty head. The archdeacon went on a mission to Syria. On his way he learned that he had been made a cardinal; on his return he was elected pope, and assumed the name of Gregory X. His first duty he conceived was to write a letter to the prince-bishop,—a master-piece of keen satire, reproach, and invective,—an earnest of what was to come; for he still felt the hand and foot of the bishop though now the father of Christendom,—the vicar of Christ, and of St. Peter, with the holy keys. It was then the turn of the infamous bishop, for the first time in his vicious career, to tremble for his life. He was cited before the council of Lyons; he was stripped of his honors; but he assassinated his successor in less than a month, and declared war against the Liégeois, who to defend their sacred rights and liberties,—one of the noblest republican constitutions in Europe,—had to contend with more than one Wild Boar of the Ardennes.‡ But the indignant Thierry Deprez, the unhappy lady's kinsman, was not false to his vow; and spared his Holiness all farther

* Foullon, Book iv. c. v. p. 357. † Bouille, vol. i. p. 295.

‡ William de la Marck and the dukes of Burgundy, with the bishop prince of that turbulent age, came under the same denomination.

trouble in bringing this reprobate scandal of the holy church to a more slow and ignominious end. He met him in the open field in 1284, and put him to death with his own hand, while he was in the act of attempting another spoliation in the old marquisate of Franchimont; thus ridding the church and the world of one of the most irreclaimable of villains.

Connected with the old castle of Chièvremont is the exploit of another prince bishop, the great Notger, who had vainly attempted to gain possession of the place by open force. Holding out the hand of amity, he proposed to Idriel, its lord, to attend in person for the purpose of christening his son and heir,—an honor which the castellain, in the hope perhaps of entrapping the bishop,—graciously accepted. But the bishop was too ingenious for him in his treachery. In the midst of the ceremony what was the surprise of the noble host to hear the lord bishop declare that he took possession of the castle in the name of the emperor and the church of Liége. At the words of "false priest and traitor!" from the indignant lord, the bishop and all his retinue threw off their clerical disguises, and appeared gleaming in arms—opened the gates to their supporters, and commenced the work of devastation and blood. The struggle was brief; the garrison was overpowered and put to death,—the beautiful Lady Isabel fled wildly from the sacred font in the oratory with her infant son in

her arms, pursued by the ferocious ruffians of the bishop; and to avoid perhaps a worse fate, she threw herself with the hope of her noble house, into one of the deep wells with which the ground floor of the feudal castles were known to be supplied. What must have been the despair of the betrayed host,—he who had thought to seize and dictate terms to the haughty prince bishop,—when he beheld the rout and destruction of his vassals; heard the fate of his wife and infant son; and, the last to fly, rushed, pursued by the infuriated assailants, to the summit of one of his highest towers, from which he flung himself headlong, leaving his castle and possessions in the hands of the ambitious prelate.

We retraced our homeward steps by Louvain, Brussels, and Antwerp. The Hotel de Ville, with a partial view of the cathedral as it is here represented, offers one of the finest *coup d'œils* that is perhaps to be seen of the elaborate Gothic style—the most perfect and intact that is to be met with in Belgium. Without pretensions to grandeur, it rivets the eye by its surpassing elegance, and the studied variety, richness, and delicacy of its ornaments. It is an exact specimen of the most flourishing epoch of the middle ages, dating its origin about 1448, and being completed forty-five years subsequently. The town of Louvain spared no pains to complete so noble a testimony of its former opulence and architectural taste, when almost

The Hall of Louvain

with part of the Cathedral

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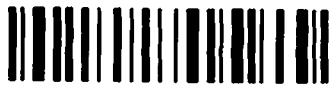
upon the eve of its decline. The elevated roof extends the entire length of the façade, flanked by towers, the light and spiral forms of which give grace and symmetry to the whole edifice, soaring to almost twice its height, and striking the eye at a great distance. The façade exhibits three rows of windows richly elaborated, with every florid ornament peculiar to the period, the exterior spaces exhibiting a series of small figures, under flowered niches, intended to represent histories from the Old Testament. Certain portions of the original edifice having suffered from the dilapidations of time, restorations have been attempted, executed with considerable care and caution, yet which are sufficiently observable to the eye of the practised architect and amateur.

Upon our return to Antwerp we found the public, including strangers and persons of every rank, in a state of delightful excitement, anticipating the grand festival about to be held in commemoration of the great painter who shed such lustre upon his native city and his country, and whose works we have repeatedly mentioned,—the immortal Rubens. These rejoicings have since taken place, and we are, at the moment we are writing, indebted to the pen of a respected correspondent for a description of the interesting and animated scene. It is pity we have not space to transcribe the whole; but to be fully appreciated it should have been seen,—the national and city colors streaming in one immense

flag from the summit of the grand cathedral, inscribed with no name—but RUBENS. Never had they floated over a city of more general jubilee,—as if the sober and business-like Antwerp were suddenly transformed into some old Venetian carnival, to honor the greatest doge who ever wedded the Adriatic. Triumphal arches met you on every side; not a public edifice, street, square, or even private house, that bore not some tribute of honor to him who raised the intellectual character of his birth-place so high in the scale of cities, and the estimation of the civilized world. Illuminations and fireworks by sea and land; processions, dissertations, exhibitions, and repeated vollies from ships and ramparts, emblazoned forth his fame in a style becoming a free and enthusiastic people, which felt how much of its former greatness and celebrity it owed to the arts, and to him who ranks amongst the very foremost of their noblest and most accomplished professors.

John Haddon, Printer, Castle Street, Finsbury.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